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ABSTRACT

Material gathered from education, religion, medicine and related fields comprises this practical approach to dealing with human development. The unity underlying the multiplicity of ways of growth (150 educational methods or systems) is a recurrent theme. This unity transcends the seemingly diverse intentions of education, psychiatry, and religion. The author contends that close scrutiny may uncover enough of a meeting ground to warrant the ambition of a unified science and art of human change. Indeed, a consistent view of man's development will fuse the three currently separated disciplines. The author suggests a phenomenological approach to practical ways of personal growth which provides an experiential meeting ground for diverse techniques, exercises and procedures that would contribute to the unfolding of man. His approach is intended to elucidate two things: (1) the unity of secular and and religious views concerning the process of the unfolding of man; and (2) the unity of various methods of achieving human growth from the standpoint of experiences these methods elicit, rather than from their external descriptions. (TL)

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THE UNFOLDING OF MAN

By: CLAUDIO NARANJO

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I INTRODUCTION

This paper is the result of a study conducted for the Educational Policy Research Center at Stanford Research Institute, that entailed a survey of over 150 educational methods or systems. These educational methods are collectively referred to here as "growth."

Some of these educational methods are of recent development, such as sensitivity training groups, structural integration, Gestalt Therapy, and psychosynthesis, whereas others may be called classical, such as Hatha yoga, tai-chi-chuan, or Zazen. What they have in common is their potential value in the educational endeavor, though they have originated in fields as diverse as Far Eastern martial arts, the business administration, psychotherapy, and drama.

Though the ultimate end of education (or psychotherapy) is the realization of being, much of it pursues this goal by way of knowing. Accordingly, the paths or methods of growth may be broadly differentiated with regard to their predominant emphasis on these two aspects of existence. The aim of some is self-insight and may well be summed up in the Delphic inscription: "Know thyself." Ways of action, by contrast, would be better expressed by the injunction: "Be thyself," or Shakespeare's "To thine own self be true." What was a classical distinction between a via contemplativa and a via activa in the religious world--Dante's way of the Cross and the way of the Eagle--holds just as well when we want to distinguish between modern methods of psychotherapy. Behavior therapy, for instance, is in the nature of a way of action, while psychoanalytic therapy is one of self-insight.

Any experience in our lives can be viewed as an occasion for self-understanding or self-realization. On the other hand, not even the techniques specially designed for these ends can bring them about in a mechanical fashion by mere repetition, with no orientation toward a purpose. In this, the psychological systems do not differ from tools in general. Waving a hammer will not drive the nails in, nor will the displaying of scissors do any cutting.

The statement that self-knowledge is an underlying theme of the Ways of Growth contrasts with the importance commonly attributed to knowledge of things. In today's popular view, self-knowledge seems to lie more in the province of psychotherapy or mysticism than in that of education, which is equivalent to saying that it is only a relevant concern to the abnormal or at least nonnormal, i.e., the underdeveloped or overdeveloped.

I would like to propose here that knowledge of the universe, history, art, or the thoughts of the wise is only educational (instrumental to personal development) to the degree that it implicitly contributes in each of us to the realization of what we are. I am sure that many have said this before, but we are far from a teaching in which this aim is held in view. Consequently, the learning of things leads nowhere beyond itself.

In speaking of self-knowledge, I am not referring to an intellectual feat. We do not need to ascertain the level of our blood sugar to know that we are hungry. In the same sense, knowing our experiences, feelings, or actions is our birthright. But, as psychiatry has demonstrated amply enough, the average human being is far from the exercise of such natural capacity.

We are estranged from the direct knowledge of our being, and this makes us feel empty and unsatisfied. We try to fill this emptiness with ownership and knowledge, but not of ourselves. We will soon own the moon and know the source of cosmic radiation, but this still leaves us as thirsty as ever: it is not what we are looking for, after all. Our hyperactivity is not our doing, and our erudition is not a knowledge of who we are.

In the various approaches to self-insight there are methods that may be understood as a "working from within," while in others the emphasis is on "working from without." Thus, we find inner-directed ways to knowledge, like some forms of meditation, which amount to the injunction: "Look with your own eyes." These are in contrast to outer-directed ways that announce, "Look! Here is the truth. See with my eyes." This is the dominant spirit of western education.

The inward approach teaches nothing but only invites experiencing; the outer-directed approach uses symbols--verbal or nonverbal--that have the virtue of eliciting the experience that gave them birth. They will not create an understanding ex-nihilo, but they act as catalysts to elicit subthreshold experiences, i.e., to bring about insights that are awaiting us on our specific path of growing understanding. As Goethe observed: "We can only understand in a book what we already know." But, we may add, the book helps us to know what we understand, and such knowing is to our understanding what water is to a growing plant.

Among the ways of the inner-directed approach is the surrender to impulse, the development of a receptivity to the deeper yearnings of the soul, commonly silenced by the noise of stereotyped behavior. This attitude may be brought to bear on art, mental representations, or the actions that constitute our life. On the whole, this is a way of expression and freedom, and it may be found in educational approaches (Summerhill), the arts (surrealism, expressionism, and the romantic attitude in general), psychotherapy (the guided daydream), mysticism (Subud), and the less specialized ways of growth (improvisational theater and dancing).

The outer-directed approaches, in the sphere of doing, use preestablished forms. Instead of, "See the truth that I am showing you," the outer-directed ways of action seem to be saying, "Do as I tell you, and you will find yourself."

Instead of verbal or visual symbols of the way of knowledge, we have here what we can understand as action-symbols. Ways of doing that, when enacted, serve as a means of invocation of man's unexpressed nature, or as containers to be filled by its substance. These structured ways of expression may also differ according to medium, such as dancing, prayer, reciting of mantras, mudras, ceremonies, or visual representations. On the whole, they constitute the way of ritual, which may be understood as prescribed expression, or as the attempt to identify with forms supplied from without.

The philosophy of this approach, well-articulated in the higher religions, is analogous to the assumption that faith will lead to enlightenment. Faith may be looked at as the enacting of conceptual forms, just as ritual is the enacting of physical forms. In both cases, the form is nothing but the trigger to an experience that is facilitated by virtue of the affinity between the symbol and the dormant reality that is symbolized.

Symbols are swords with two edges. They may act as biological organizers do in the development of the embryo and thus influence life in the service of itself. But symbols can also substitute for life. The catalysts of understanding--roadsigns, "fingers pointing at the moon"--then become mere tokens of understanding: learning and the catalysts of being--vehicles--become tokens of being: dead customs and standards of value, empty rituals, and manners.

Both the approach of freedom and that of form have something in common when they are contrasted to a third possibility. Whether in surrendering to an inner-directed stream of events or to the directive of a given pattern of action and thought, the individual is identifying with life. This may be perceived as an identification with his deeper self or with the form (character, rite, and so forth) being enacted, which serves as a vehicle for his projected self. Thus, in meditating on an object or form, a state is being sought where the subject-object distinction seems to vanish, and the subject is the object or experiences the object from within. This quality of experience is present in a greater or lesser degree in all intuitive thinking, by contrast to discursive thought.

There is an alternative to these approaches of identification with experience, whether in the form of self or object. It is precisely the opposite: a disidentification or detachment from the contents of consciousness. In the cognitive domain, this contrasts with the attempt to see things one way or another: all that it aims at is getting rid of opinions, or, as Socrates puts it, acknowledging ignorance. It is not a way of knowing but of "unknowing," to borrow the term of an anonymous medieval mystic. A comtemporary echo of such a notion is conveyed by that of "blowing one's mind." On the active side, this contrasts with the ways of "doing" this or that: it is a way of nondoing, as it may be found in Taoism or in the practice of Zazen. To display the alternative of detachment in its proper relationship to other methods of self-knowledge and action in visual terms would require one more dimension than our design, for it cannot be said to lie in between the extremes of form and freedom (as I have represented it), nor closer to either alternative. It would be more exact to regard it as a third vertex of a triangle, along with the two forms of merging with existence.

The way of detachment or disidentificaton is no other than the way of asceticism. In practice, it is a way of self-denial and deprivation. In essence, it is an attempt to experience what the self is by dismissing everything that is nonself. Those who have had such experiences speak of the self as either an entity independent of physical phenomena, or, in more sophisticated terms, as an emptiness, a void or nothingness that, like space, holds all things within it. It is also said that he who has found who he really is can find full support in his being and can choose to enjoy the world or give it up. That this experience of self-as-not-the world exists, I have no reason to doubt; nor that it seems to correlate not with an apathetic indifference, but with love and creativity.

Perhaps because it is the mystics who have spoken of such a state of being, and because asceticism looms large in their ways, the "detachment" of which they speak inspires some suspicion. Also, it tends to be considered as something different from the unfolding of self through self-expression, self-observation, understanding works of wisdom, or growing into one. I think that this is failing to see beyond the words used to speak of psychological processes. The mastery over himself that the ascetic seeks is no different from that which comes from maturation through any of the ways of growth. His relative needlessness is similar to that which comes from spiritual fulfillment attained through any of the approaches.

The difference between the "positive" ways of self-identification and the "negative" way of emptiness is that the former stress the growth process proper, whereas the latter stress the removal of obstacles. It is a via purgative, a getting rid of, rather than an acquisition. Yet, this act of giving up is the precondition for a receptivity. It is the way of death for the sake of rebirth.

As contradictory as the ways of self-identification and disidentification may seem, they too, converge in their aims. Just as a snake cannot grow without shedding its old skin, we cannot attain deeper identification with our real selves (or with other beings and things) without disidentification with the prison of ego-centeredness that underlies all of our percepts and experiences. The approach of asceticism seems to be saying, "You are all wrong--start from scratch." Its goal is the freedom from that is necessary to the freedom for the other ways.

Today, on one hand, there is disappointment with knowing, and an impatient directness seems to have led to a proliferation of methods that lie in the domain of action. The importance of the body is stressed in the newer forms of psychotherapy; "breaking-through" rather than self-insight has become the measure of inner progress, and the eastern disciplines of movement receive attention, along with the newer applications of dance to personal development.

On the other hand, the trend is from an outer and directive approach to one that is inward, liberating, and direct. Just as in the arts there is a shift from structure to freedom, there is a definite trend toward nondirectiveness in psychotherapy, education, and religion.

The model presented in the foregoing pages may not be the only way of introducing order into the multiplicity of ways of growth. Still, its few dimensions (inner versus outer, being versus knowing, identification versus disidentification) can be help to understand the unity underlying such multiplicity, and even a unity beyond the dichotomies that it presents. It is with such unity that this paper is concerned: unity of aspirations, underlying strategies, and end-state, and change-process.

The following Chapter II explores the question of goals, and discusses the mutual meeting ground of education, religion, and psychotherapy. The remainder of the text deals with the basic approaches that may be discerned in the spiritual traditions of mankind, and the last of these is a phenomenological approach to the change process and to the end-state of the ways of growth.

II THE GOALS OF HUMAN TRANSFORMATION

Whether it goes by the term affective domain, human change, self development, or emotional growth, there can be little doubt that, as judged by the amount of talk and writing, the trend of the moment is toward more attention to human transformation in education.

Reasons that have been given for this emphasis include (1) reaction to the technocratic panacea and great expectations for computer-based technology in education, (2) recognition of emotional factors in low educational performance of the disadvantaged, (3) increasing need for psychological resiliency to cope with the changes and complexities of society of the future, and (4) increasing awareness of the role of affective-domain education in releasing human potential and enrichment of individual life.

In this chapter, I shall attempt to show that three institutions of society are overtly concerned with the eliciting of change or the facilitation of a change-process in the minds or behavior of human beings: they are education, medicine, and religion. The nature of the change process may at first glance seem quite specific to it: development being the province of education; healing that of medicine; and salvation, liberation, or enlightenment that of religion. Curiously, the three were treated as one in the past, and the shaman or primitive mystic was a medicine man, a wise man, counselor, initiator, and artist. Today we seem to be rediscovering the ultimate unity of interest beyond the immediate purposes of seemingly diverse intentions of education, religion, and psychiatry. Indeed, if we examine closely the nature of these three quests (for growth, enlightenment, and sanity), we may discover enough of a meeting ground between them to warrant the ambition of a unified science and art of human change..

Implicit in the art of education is the belief in a spontaneous growth process that may be influenced, facilitated, or impeded by environmental conditions. It is generally assumed that just as the body needs proper food and a certain amount of protection to survive and develop into what it can potentially become, so the mind needs proper nourishment, exercise, and care. To become what? Here the discrepancies begin. If the answer is "what it can potentially become," we have a humanistic approach in the true sense of making man the measure: to each according to his goal and trend. Education, in this attitude, becomes the task of giving each individual what he thirsts for without any attempt to mold him into a pre-established pattern. Just as the gardener trusts that the shape of every plant is predetermined from within, if he only provides it with the optimal conditions, the educator in this approach holds trust in the innate goodness of man and conceives of himself as a helper of this intrinsic growth urge.

Needless to say, we are speaking here of an approach that probably cannot be found in pure form in reality, just as a perfect circle cannot be found outside the world of ideas. We can find it as a component in education in general, though, and as the major component in some instances thereof.

Another answer to the goal of development can be sought in terms of some pre-established view as to what man's end is, where his unfolding leads, and what constitutes his most desirable state of being. The answers to these questions have been the concern of philosophers and prophets through the ages, and (as Huxley has attempted to show in his "perennial philosophy") their answers are not as different as might be expected. Beyond culturally bound notions of right and wrong, the wise ones of all lands throughout history seem to agree regarding the existence of a way or path leading to man's fulfillment and the finding of his true place in the world, not according to a theoretical construction but through realization.

According to such views, the development of a child should be but a first stage in a long developmental process, the end of which may well not be attained within an individual's lifetime. Furthermore, the "development" of the child may be seen more as a thwarting of his true direction in the midst of culturally disturbed environmental conditions, so that a conversion will be necessary to reorient his life in view of the true path, or a "death" of his outward nature, a renunciation or separation (as in Christ's "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household," Matthew XI, 36). Such notions are inseparable from the mythical accounts of the fall of man in all religions, for the condition of fallen man--humanity--is that of "sin," "illusion," "sleep," "blindness," and so forth, and his first aim is that of undoing his "fall."

Thus, the first stage in the attainment of spiritual fullness, according to Taoism, is to become a "true man". And only after this, can man become a "universal man." In Sufism, too, we find the notions of "true man" and "universal man" as two successive stages in a developmental process, the first of which is in the nature of reowning something that we have forgotten or lost. Many examples of this concept could be cited. The notion of "forgetting" a higher world is so important in Plato's philosophy that even the word that he uses for "truth" (a-letheia) means no-forgetting. And in the poetic monument of Christianity Dante's Commedia, two stages of attainment are depicted. In the first, man reaches "earthly paradise," his original abode. Here he is healed, and Dante says of himself:

I came back from those holiest waters new
Remade, reborn, like a sun wakened tree
That spreads new foliage to the spring dew
In sweet freshness, healed of winter's scars;
Perfect, pure, and ready for the stars.

Beyond this, man can still venture into "Paradise," a world of transcendence, where he experiences a unity with the cosmos as it conceived of by religious thought in general. The religious notions of a way or path, Tao, or dharma find an echo in some contemporary psychological formulations, such as Goldstein's self-actualizing drive of the organism or Jung's description of the individuation.

On the whole, psychiatry and psychology share with the religious view both the notion of a development process that goes much beyond the school years and that of a wrongness in the condition of average humanity. In the terms of dynamic psychology, the process of maturation has been arrested in childhood years, and much of the psychotherapeutic process amounts to a liberation from childish fixations or blocks to growth. Furthermore, psychology moves more and more in the direction of seeing an aim beyond that of mere healing. Beyond the correction of a wrongness, the psychotherapist sees again and again that there remains a void to fill and an urge for more that his patient wants to satisfy and that cannot be filled by material ambitions; by his family life, or his work.

The answers to such a challenge vary in psychiatry, so that Frankl speaks of "search for meaning" and logotherapy, Jung speaks of analytical psychology as the modern process of initiation, Maslow points out that the peak experiences that most people have at one moment or another in their lifetime indicate the possibility of a more satisfactory way of being that is impeded by unfulfilled motivations, such as those of security and respect.

It is impossible for a consistent view of man's development not to affect the practice of education that deals with the basic stages in the process. Thus it is that in primitive cultures education (as distinct from the acquisition of practical abilities) is inseparable from the process of initiation into manhood, which is essentially religious. And whenever religion has been alive in a culture, education has followed its leads. Since dynamic psychology is highly concerned with development and the importance of the early years of life, education has been influenced by it in both subtle and obvious ways. Consequently, we can expect that the link between these fields will become closer as psychological ideas become more precise and effective.

The danger of an educational approach that has a preconceived notion of man's goal is in its potential rigidity--as the history of education amply shows. In this, as in other fields, a truth that is learned and repeated is not a truth anymore, but a mechanical act. A statement of man's desirable goal or path may very well be accurate, yet there is a difference between intellectual statements and the understanding that can lead to the application of a truth. Without such dynamic understanding, all systems can become ways of thwarting the very development that they want to foster.

The first approach is unconditional and trusting, like mother's love; the second, like father-love guides toward the highest ideals (See Fromm's The Sane Society[1]*). The balance between both components will be, in my opinion, an inescapable issue in the educational process. Thus, the issue is between the individual and tradition, the unknown and the known, creativity and the wisdom of the ages.

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* Superscript numbers denote references listed at the end of this paper.

There is a third answer to the goal of human development, and this is more implicit than explicit, even though, perhaps for this very reason it is the most powerful. Such a goal, according to a third component in the direction of education, is not that chosen by either the individual or by tradition, but is that of adaptation to the habitual way of being in a given culture. It is therefore not dictated by love (like the humanistic), or by reason (like the idealistic), but by custom or habit. For this, it might be regarded as the most mechanistic of the three.

Not only does a child mechanically imitate what he sees and hears, from language and gait to personality styles, but much of the socialization process is in the rate of positive and negative reinforcement that he receives (praise and punishment) in terms of what grownups like. It could be said that behind each command or prohibition there is an implicit statement of "this is right" that most often has not stemmed from thinking or decision, but from having been exposed to the same implicit dogma in earlier years. Thus, it is "right" to use the fingers in eating in India, but not in England; it is right for an Eskimo to share his wife, but not for a Jiraro Indian; it is right to be future-oriented in the United States, but not in the present-oriented areas of Mexico or the tradition-oriented China at the beginning of the century.

Regardless of whatever is right in terms of human needs and the situation at the moment, there are notions of what is right that are obviously the rationalization of a process of conditioning. The source of the cultural traits that the thus transmitted may be in an ideal that became automatized in economic circumstances, or the emotional needs of parents. A child's demand for affection, for instance, may give rise to guilt feelings in parents that are falling short of filling his need and originate a statement that it is not nice to cry, that grownups do not complain and so forth, and thus contribute to perpetuating traits of both independence and affectlessness.

The pervasiveness of the socialization process cannot fail to color the educational endeavor, and it may even become an explicit goal of education to produce this or that kind of "men that the country needs." Yet this molding process cannot be really understood as an approach--adequate or not--to development, but, rather, as an impurity in the approaches to that end.

Conditioning does not posit a growth process or anything like a "human nature." Its goals are, in principle, those of convenience, and when it operates blindly, it preserves the status quo. Systems based on conditioning constitute ways of change but not necessarily ways of growth. Yet principles of conditioning may be used in the service of human development. Such use may take the form of a deconditioning (desensitization) that allows for increased flexibility and choice, or a reinforcement of the natural developmental process until it is experienced as self-rewarding. This is how behaviorists currently reinterpret psychonalysis and client-centered therapy, in the context of which the therapist at least encourages the act of self-disclosure and expression, and we need not minimize such aspects of the therapeutic interaction.

Although development is, quite understandably, the concern of education more than any other institution, it is not its sole concern, much of education being in the nature of an extension of the socialization process, whereby one generation molds the next into a form as similar as possible to its own. On the other hand, development is a core concept both in religion (when we reach for its true significance) and in psychiatry or psychology. Furthermore, it is of development, too, that they are speaking, though in a different language, positing that because of having strayed from it, man is in sin or ill.

The idea of psychological disease, after being a purely descriptive one, defined by the presence of certain "symptoms" because, on the one hand a statistical one, according to which "neuroticism" or even "psychoticism" are present in some degree in everybody, just like body weight. On the other hand, it became divorced from its external signs or symptoms. Thus, in dynamic psychology, a neurotic personality or action is judged from its motivation rather than from its behavioral reality or even the subjective state of well-being or discomfort of the individual at the moment. Also, in reaching reality for a deeper understanding of neurosis, psychiatry becomes concerned more and more with matters such as authenticity or estrangement, the real self, responsibility, and others that were formerly the concern of philosophy or religions. In fact, what psychiatry is doing is not just curing physical or emotional symptoms of psychic origin, but helping the individual to find the good life for himself, just as philosophy and religion did for centuries before they came to be regarded as abstract speculation and authoritarian dogma.

Just as psychiatry today tends to see symptoms as the outer manifestation of the failure to meet life with the right attitude, religions at the time of their greatest influence have seen man's behavioral and moral shortcomings as outward expressions of his "original sin," which is not moral, but of the nature of a spiritual mistake or a disease. "Salvation" comes from the Latin salvare, just as "sanity," a connection most clearly to be seen in the Latin languages (as, in French, salut--salvation of healing). The same connection may be seen in the German Heilig (saint) and heilen (to heal or make saintly). In the Old Testament and in rabbinical literature, on the other hand, sin is frequently described as folly or madness. In Buddhism, too, the question is one of deliverance from the suffering into which man has precipitated himself as a result of his ignorance, a condition that is alternatively called "sin" or "disease."

There is apparently no uniformity or consensus among present day psychiatrists or psychologists as to either the boundaries of "mental disease" or its defining criteria; the concepts of different schools range from the strictly symptomatic one of disease to those of humanistic or dynamic psychology. It is the former, restricted sense of disease and sanity that Merton is referring to in "A Devout Mediation in Memory of Adolph Eichmann":[2] "One of the most disturbing facts that came out in the Eichmann trial was that a psychiatrist examined him and pronounced him perfectly sane. I do not doubt it at all, and that is precisely why I find it disturbing."

And later in the same essay:

> I am beginning to realize that "sanity" is no longer a value or an end in itself. The "sanity" of modern man is about as useful to him as the huge bulk and muscles of the dinosaur. If he were a little less sane and a little more doubtful, a little more aware of his absurdities and contradictions, perhaps there might be a possibility of his survival. But if he is sane, too sane--perhaps we must say that in a society like ours the worst insanity is totally without anxiety, totally "sane."

Contrast such a point of view with the following:

> ...Let us begin with a very extreme case. Let us take, for instance, one of advanced senile dementia. Why does everyone regard such a person diseased? What first strikes us is the loss of his essential psychological faculties; he cannot do what others can do; he cannot, for instance, orient himself in time or space, attend to his physiologic needs, control his sphincters and so on. Yet it is clear that such an individual is not considered to be sick merely because he cannot fulfill such functions, for, if this were the case, an infant would have to be considered just as diseased. What is pathological here is not his inability but inability where we would expect ability."...

After considering other instances, the writer concludes that

> ... We always evaluate an individual's psychological activity in terms of his optimal potential, and do not regard as mentally ill he who behaves in this or that manner, but him whose optimal potential for performance is altered from within.

> In other words, his potentialities are prevented their full unfolding because they are hindered from within and in spite of himself, so that they are thwarted and deviated from full expression.

Thus at this point a medical conception becomes inseparable from a conception of man's nature, man's purpose and destiny, and particularly the direction and goal of his development. In fact, the issues of health and development, the concerns of medicine and education, become one.

It would seem that the existential and ever-present foundation of the quests for both healing and enlightenment is in a dissatisfaction on the part of a fraction of humanity, a thirst that cannot be quenched by objective achievements. A traditional psychiatrist looks on such an urge as abnormal, thinking: "Here is a person who cannot enjoy the given and is therefore unsatisfied. He must be cured of his inability to enjoy to the fullest."

From the religious, spiritual, or esoteric point of view, the same person may be regarded as one who is no more sick (or "removed from God," "divided from his deeper self,") than average humanity, but has not become anesthetized to his suffering. Just as physical pain signals a physical damage, psychological distress may be taken as the functional signal of a psychological wrongness, and many a neurotic may be just more awake to it than a completely automatized, "adapted" human being.

The individual, too, may interpret his own urge according to different alternatives presented by the culture. Some typical statements are the following:

- "I lack something, I feel unfulfilled, empty; I should study, acquire a wider culture and understanding of things, or travel, and then I will feel satisfied."
- "I lack something; my life is not rich enough. I know the answer is in love. I have not found somebody to whom I can give all my love and who loves me. Warmth and caring is what is missing from my life."

- "I lack something, I feel unfulfilled. Nothing that I do or acquire will give me the sense of fulfillment that I seek, this I know from experience. The answer lies in myself. I am very far from God. I have been neglecting the inner quest, forgetting that this is what I really want."
- "I lack something. No matter what I do, I feel unfulfilled and empty. This is what psychiatrists call "depression," or perhaps neurasthenia, or simple schizophrenia? I should do somthing about myself and go into treatment."

The last two statements converge, in that the motivation or dissatisfaction is interpreted as one for inner change, but they differ in that one is cast in a religious language and the other in the medical or psychological terms. The difference between the religious and psychological interpretations of dissatisfaction is in no way that of a theistic and an atheistic view, as typically evidenced by atheistic religions (such as Buddhism or Taoism). It lies more in the relative stress on the ideas of "wrongness" or lack. While the concept of disease is that of a wrongness in the organism or mind, the urge directing the quest for enlightenment is interpreted as a lack of fulfillment, a separation from God or higher faculties, the process of attainment frequently being depicted as a reaching of another shore, crossing a bridge, climbing up to the heights or down into an abyss.

Whatever language we choose to speak of the inner events that are the issue of both psychiatry and religion, we can see that wrongness (ill-ness) and deficit (de-ficiency) are interdependent. Even in moral language, the word "defect" points at the idea of a lack, just as "failure" and fault derive from the Latin faltare, meaning to be short of something. Conversely, "virtue" derives from the Indoeuropean vix, denoting energy, force, from which sprung the Greek vir = man (as in virile).

So, in theological views, man's sickness and sins are the outcome of his lack, being removed from the presence of God; and conversely, his being removed from the gift of God's presence is the outcome of his sins, which he must become conscious of and repair in "at-onement."

In the psychological view, too, man's sickness (symptoms) are the outcome of a lack that different writers have presented in different ways: consciousness, self-love, contact with the real self, and so forth. Conversely, such lack is dependent on the "wrong" pattern of psychological functioning that resists being altered and sets up defenses.

Let us now turn to the nature of the religious quest associated with terms such as salvation, deliverance, enlightenment, and union with or dissolution in God.

As in psychiatry or education, we find here many "schools" differing from one another not so much in their essential goal, but in their symbolic and conceptual language. Even more than in the domains of education and psychotherapy, perhaps, the invisible power of socialization has seized religion, using it for its own end of molding people into conformity with a given age and place.

It is because of the local ethical and dogmatic admixtures of religion that some prefer to speak of mysticism when referring to the common core of religious experience out of which the different religions have sprung. Others, still, prefer to use "mysticism" in connection with a particular modality of religious experience and development and prefer to speak of the esoteric in reference to "the transcendent unity of religions" (F. Shuon, for instance).[3] Furthermore, within some religions (Taoism, Buddhism) an esoteric or "inner" circle may be found wherein the essence of religion and of man are the issue. And there are, of course, esoteric groups (of varying authoritativeness and quality) that are not bound to any single "religion."

According to the esoteric tradition, many world religions have originated from a single stream of transmission of living understanding in which their leaders were initiated; a stream that remains independent of each of them and today is still alive. This idea runs through the books of René Guènon, for instance, and, from a journalistic point of view, through the pages of Powel's, Return of the Magicians. Additional interesting documents with this same theme of a surviving and ever-renewed science of man include Lefort's, The Teachings of Gurdjieff,[4] and Roy Davidson's compilation, Documents of Contemporary Dervish Communities.[5]

Some of the religious concepts that refer to the goal of the human quest are implicitly negative: salvation is salvation from sin, just as liberation or deliverance imply something to be liberated from and Nirvana (extinction) implies that there is an illusion to be extinguished. Other expressions are positive, like enlightenment, awakening, or union (with the divine). Yet the positive and negative aspects are interdependent. Thus, enlightenment, according to Buddhism, puts an end to the "three evil roots": delusion, craving, and hate. On the other hand, sin, in Judaism, is a rebellion in the face of God's law (man's duty toward the law being a consequence of the doctrine of God's kingship). And God's law, behind the ten commandments delivered unto Moses on Mount Sinai, is one, "Seek the Lord and live" (Amos 5,6).*

It would be futile to attempt to define in a few paragraphs the ineffable goal of religious endeavor, but we can probably agree that in its negative aspects it is closely related to the notions of healing and outgrowing; while in its positive aspect, it is in the nature of a growth or evolution of the mind. Indeed, the symbolism of generation and development pervades all religious thought, where we find the ideas of rebirth, emanation, the tree of life, and others holding a central role.

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* For a commentary on this, see Schechter, "The Torah in its aspect of Law," in Aspects of Rabbinic Theology.[6]

A realization of the commonality between psychotherapy and religion has had to await both a deepening in the understanding of emotional disorders and a de-dogmatization in the grasp of religious phenomena. Increased communication with the East has been a factor in the process, as well as the work of those who have expounded the essential unity of religions.* For discussions of the relevance of Eastern disciplines to psychotherapy, the interested reader might refer to Watts,[8] Boss,[9] Fromm,[10] Jacobs,[11] Jung,[12,13] or Zimmer.[14]

The main concern of this paper is not with the convergence of theoretical formulations in various streams of thought, but rather with those of practical ways of personal growth that have originated within the different spiritual disciplines, therapeutic schools, and educational approaches. Before discussing the change process in itself, we will briefly consider the main historical expressions of the ways of growth.

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* See Bhagavan Das for instance, and the works of Eliade.

III TRADITIONAL WAYS AND CONTEMPORARY ECHOES

The Ways of Action

From times immemorial, men seem to have been concerned with the idea that action is not only relevant to the attainment of external and practical aims--the consequences of action--but to the question of self-cultivation and self-realization. Moreover, man's question as to what to do to attain spiritual fulfillment has been answered by religious and mystical traditions in a way that considers no single action of a person as irrelevant to such a goal. According to Haridas Chaudhuri,[15] the Karma Yoga, the yoga of action, can be applied to every integral discipline of the spirit, for each entails action of an element or component. In Buddhism, right action proceeds from dharma; in Taoism, right action or virtue (Te) is conduct in accordance with Tao, the way. Thus, according to Taoism, each thing in the universe has its Tao. There is the Tao of heaven and that of the earth; and as every tree has its own Tao, man has, too; though every individual may or may not be in accordance with his Way, i.e., the way of his own nature. In the theistic language of the Judeo-Christian tradition, Tao, the will of the cosmos, is expressed as God's will.

It is perhaps a temptation of our modern minds to seek the specific means whereby we separate psychological exercises from the context of life, and perhaps conceive of them as a substitute for life, or at least as a "self-realization" compartment set aside from the compartment of practicality and everyday affairs. It may be well to bear in mind that the great spiritual systems throughout history were not conceived within such boundaries. Thus, the practice of meditation in Buddhism is considered as a stage of practice to be embarked on during and after the observance of the precepts. In Patanjali's system of yoga, the asanas (postures), pranayama (regulation of breathing), and other disciplines presuppose the first steps of Yama and Niyama: constraint and discipline. A way of living thus becomes the first "technique."

What "right" action or "God's will" for a given individual at a given time is for him to find out with the totality of his faculties. Yet it is conceivable that certain generalities may be found as the most probable channels of right action in a given culture and a given set of circumstances. This is the basis of the Judaic conception of God's law. While in detail the laws consisted in greater part of "statutes relating to different sections of the community and to its multifarious institutions, ecclesiastical as well as civil," (statutes that have been obsolete for centuries)* such institutions were, at the time, the kingdom of God.

Schechter[6] comments that the old Rabbinic literature is even devoid of the words spiritual and material, the "things of heaven," covering a much wider area of human life than is commonly imagined. And he quotes that when Hillel the Great, the inspirer of the saying, "Let all thy deeds be for the sake of Heaven," was about to take a bath, he said, "I am going to perform a religious act by beautifying my person that was created in the image of God!"

Understandably, principles that were once designed for man's inner unfolding, in the situation of the times become ends by themselves; moral injunctions based on no more than authority and custom. So much so, that we are prone to see more than social convenience at the root of the commandments of different cultures, and we distrust the idea of "deity" as being no more than a matter of superego commands resulting from the internalization of parental or societal norms. However true it is that such is the psychological nature of duty in most individuals, a one-sided view of right action may blind us to the significance of everyday life as a way, not only in the times of the Sermon of the Mount or the Dhammapada, but today. Its significance is what counts most: "Do not follow in the footsteps of the ancients," Basho says, "seek what they sought."

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* "The laws . . . relating to idolatry, incest and the sacrifices of children to Moloch could hardly be considered as coming within the province of practical life even of the pre-Christian Jew."[6]

Right-action as a way is not "right" in a moral sense, but in that of being conducive to man's development, by guiding him in doing what "his nature" really wants to do. Commenting on the Jewish law, which is so remarkable for its quality of command, Schechter says that, "the whole man stands in the service of God, each limb or member of his body being entrusted with the execution of its respective functions."[8] The injunction "seek the Lord and life," therefore, can be understood as that of "be yourself." And in this, the original meaning of precepts that later become social rules, the precepts constitute integrative symbols--visual or physical--that anticipate the unexpressed in the individual and guide it into expression.

But the law is not the only answer to the finding of right-action. Just as with the answer to the direction of personal development, which can be either ready-made or found anew in every instance, so with action: we find two opposite approaches that lead to the same goal. One is that of precepts, ideals, and discipline. The other that of self-trust and self-indulgence.

The way of ideals and duty, injunctions and restraint, is one of friction, where the individual can know himself better in his imperfection and develop his will. The opposite way provides an opportunity for self-knowledge in self-expression, unconstrained by the enacting of ideals, and should lead to the outgrowing of wrong-action or imperfection through the greatest occasion for experience and choice.

The relevance of action to the spiritual quest is not only in terms of what is being done or right-action proper, but of how it is done. Right-doing, whatever the action in hand, has been cultivated as a way in different schools. It is, however, a most prominent feature in the Dervish tradition and in Zen Buddhism, where it has created cultural forms like the art of archery and the tea ceremony. Gurdjieff, who had a Dervish background, is reported to have said: "If you can serve a cup of tea right, you can do anything."

Right-doing implies more than mechanical adequacy in the action being undertaken. This is only the outward aspect of what is being sought by the doer, which is his proper attitude and proper relationship to his action. "Proper," here, like "right," does not refer to normative criteria, but to what is both operant and dictated by a reality deeper than the obvious. For instance, one of the principles in Karma yoga is that of detachment from the fruits of action, so that whatever is done is done for its own sake. This injunction is not a normalistic one, but stems from the experience of man in certain self-validating state of consciousness, where such detachment not only appears natural, but stems from a realization of independence from the stream of events and is the outcome in a shift of the world-view.

By acting as if he were in such a state of mind, a person might expect to facilitate the emergence of it as a reality, just as an actor may facilitate with his words and movements the emergence in himself of feelings and views such as those of his character. Such feelings that are not imaginary but express an aspect of himself, and it would not be possible for him to summon them up if this were not so.

Right-doing, understood in our inner sense, amounts to a form of meditation in action and is so dense a thing that it cannot be adequately dealt with in this context. A treatment of the subject may be found in Humphreys' The Way of Action.[16]

There are categories of action that are devoid of practicality and exist only for themselves. Such are the cases of ritual and art. Art might be conceived of as a condensation of life, and life as an extended work of art that we can create. Right-action, for the artist, is being himself to the fullest in his act of creation, being lived by his life, right-doing beyond technical perfection--which amounts to his being his best self at the moment. For the perfect act is inseparable from the perfect state of mind. The practical implications of life pull us in different directions and conflict with our doing our everyday actions for ourselves--that is, for our disinterested aim, paradoxical as this may sound. Art and ritual, by contrast, are only for ourselves, or for themselves, so that we can find ourselves in being for them in their enacting. They are occasions for the experience of that "right attitude" that can then either be taken or not be taken into everyday life.

The Ways of Feeling

Action is the outer part of man, and whenever it is not a matter of automatic habit but of choice, it bespeaks of an inner world of feelings. Hence, the word "e-motion": it moves us. The ways of action attempt to reach the inner through the outer. Man can know himself, or express or realize himself, through his actions, and thus develop. But there are ways that have the life of feelings as their focus more directly than others, however inseparable they may be from specific actions that lend them support.

As with action, we may conceive of right-feelings and wrong-feelings, not in terms of any authoritarian norm, but in terms of reality at the moment and the function of an organism. Such notion of right and wrong is implicit in us when we speak of "emotional disturbances"--the target of the psychiatric endeavor. And so, as we posited that "right-action" is not in the following of an external dictate but in the accord with the Tao, and with the deeper laws of the organism (rather than superficial automatisms) so we can imagine that the "right feelings" are always in us, that is, they constitute our real feelings, and are only covered by the reactive feelings that take much of our conscious attention.

If this conceptual model may be accepted, we can see how the question of change in feelings (transformation, psychological healing) relates to that of development of feelings. Only real feelings can develop, and these will tend to sweep aside the less real feelings that constitute the affective disturbances, pseudo feelings that usually veil them. That the "negative" feelings constituting neurotic reactions are less real than others does not appear to be subjectively true, but it is psychologically defensible in that (1) they do not stem from the real self but from an idealized self that is ultimately a fiction or a product of the imagination, and (2) they are not responses to a real situation but to an interpretation thereof, in terms of childish fantasies.

Yet, even if the relative unreality of neurotic feelings were to be regarded objectionable, we may retain the notion of two sets of feelings--those of the real self in us and those of the characters that we house in our psyche--identifications, social roles, and those of our proud self-ideal.

In the domain of action, we can contrast one approach of pursuing an ideal action by moving against the tendency of the moment, with another, which amounts to the expression of the tendencies of the moment, in all their imperfection. So in the domain of feeling, we can see a contrast between the way of the monk and that of most forms of psychotherapy. In the former, the aim is to cultivate the most real and basic feelings, which are assured to be those of love toward all beings and devotion, while the negative feelings are uprooted by denying them attention and expression. In the latter, the way is that of catharsis, by which the person gets rid of his psychological garbage in the process of giving it expression. Typical of the first approach is prayer; typical of the second, honest communication, whether in confession, friendship, or on the analytical couch. Art lies between both; it can be approached as a way to express either the inner or the outer, ideal beauty or the affective state of the moment. As an embodiment of man's unfulfilled and unexpressed deeper reality, both great art and ritual may be regarded as vessels of collective expression, with whose forms men can identify and by means of which they can establish indirect contact with themselves. When a culture dies, its art still remains, and in it survives its essence.

Only out of a deep sense of independence and invulnerability can the exhortations of the great religious leaders be fulfilled, such as Christ's, "Resist not evil; if any smite thee on the right cheek, turn the left to him as well"; or Buddha's "conquer hatred with love"; Muhammand's "recompense evil, conquer it with good."

Just as right-action as both natural consequence of or means of attainment of inner growth has historically turned into religious moralism and puritanism, so, too, the superficial interpretation of right-love has originated to emotionalism, which Engels probably had in mind in speaking of "the opium of religions." There is a difference between the mere play of imagination and the realization that God is the object of one's longings. Such a realization is equivalent to or becomes that of being in the presence of God, for, as Pascal describes it, "How would I have seeked for

Thee had I not known Thee?" The whole process is not so much a redirecting of desire, but a meditation on the object of desire to find its ultimate aim, in the course of which process the appearance of the aim changes.

Again, the nature of this change will probably not be one leading to look in a different direction but deeper in the same direction. The way in which love of a man or woman can evolve into love of God a bhakti yogin would say is in discovering that this is what it was in the first place, that particular individual being the window through which we could perceive some of the divine radiance. When we know the object of our love, we can find it in all beings, and in ourselves.

In a way, what devotionalism is saying is that what we really want is what we have, and not realizing this (or not realizing what we have), we crave for different things that we do not have. Such a craving is a distortion of our original love for that which we are (mistakenly) missing. When we find it, again we can love, enjoy, glorify, sanctify existence. The whole of the mystical way, therefore, can be conceived as a discovery of what lies in front of our eyes and of how it is what we want, just as in the process of developing appreciation for art we may learn to dicover what sounds or colors convey and that they are saying what we want to say out of our inmost selves.

The Way of Knowledge

If it is our feelings that determine our actions, it is our thoughts that direct our feelings. But not all of our thinking is conscious, and our emotion, too, as Pascal puts it "has reasons that reason knoweth not."

We are coming to a period of disillusion as to the power of thought when man's behavior is at stake, not realizing perhaps that it is precisely the power of wrong thought that has caused the calamities that disillusion us. That is how Socrates would have seen it, for, to him all evil stemmed from ignorance, like for Jesus ("Forgive them for they know not what they do.") or Buddha, who saw all suffering ultimately as the fruit of delusion or lack of spiritual vision (avidya). Hence, the importance given to understanding and the teaching of the truth by those who have felt inclined to change men for the better.

The assumption that knowledge can have an effect on being is not only to be found in religion and moral philosophies, but in humanism, and is at the origin of the cultivation of the humanities in our school curricula (so much so, that education as a whole is mostly restricted to this area of knowledge, and more particularly to verbal information).

Yet just as the way of action can deteriorate into estranged doing and blind submission, and that of devotion into imaginings guided by conformity, so the way of knowing finds its caricatured echo in dogmatism, empty erudition, and one-sided intellectualism. Therefore, it is interesting to see how knowledge has been regarded and used as a way of growth.

First of all, it may be well to clarify what we mean by "knowing." A. Huxley, in an essay on knowledge and understanding,[17] proposes that we use the former term for the amassing of information and the latter for a more direct apprehension of reality that engages our feelings as well as our reasoning.

Knowledge is always in terms of concepts and can be passed on by means of words or other symbols. Understanding consists of a nonconceptual element and therefore cannot be passed on. It is an immediate experience, and immediate experience can only be talked about (very inadequately), never shared. Nobody can actually feel another's pain or grief, another's love, or joy, or hunger. And similarly, nobody can experience another's understanding of a given event or situation.

Such a use of the term "knowing" is by no means universal, but this distinction is important in drawing our attention to the existence of different qualities and degrees of knowing, different ways of apprehension of reality.

The solution to ineffability in the contemplative approaches (Griani Yoga in India) lies mainly in the use of symbols and in the art of their assimilation.

The tools in such an art are the ideas, seed-utterances, or images, that may take different forms according to the tradition: Koans in Zen, parables and even jokes in Dervish tariqas, lines from the Scriptures in the Christian world, mandalas, yantras, and mantras in Tibet, and so forth. But the art itself is that of meditation, which is that of examining experience in terms of the model, or becoming absorbed in the model until it shines on the ever-present experience.

There is something in common in the ways of action, feeling, and intellection as I have described them, which is the assimilation of an act, feeling, or idea on faith until it becomes a personal reality, having grown into an understanding. By living as if such and such an action were the right one, as if such and such a feeling and idea were the true ones, an individual transformation takes place. Thus development proceeds, guided, as it were, by the virtue of such key signs and symbols that derive their power from being rooted in man's shared deeper reality.

Faith, therefore, in its intellectual aspect, amounts to the trusting willingness to accept a road-map. It is the willingness to use a concept, assuming its truth, for the sake of the experiences, that living according to it may eventually lead into a certainty. Such is the understanding of faith, for example, in St. Augustine of Hippo: "Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand in order that you may believe, but make the act of faith in order that you may understand; for unless you make an act of faith you will not understand."

This process of temporary acceptance of a truth in view of its eventual understanding is by no means unique to metaphysical truths, but is to be seen in any learning and teaching situation. It is the domain of metaphysical truth, however (perhaps for the difficulty of the full realization that is the aim), that statements of faith become statements of belief, substituting rather than leading to the understanding.

James Jeans[18] commenting on how both the wave-interpretation and the corpuscle-interpretation of light make it possible to understand certain phenomena, though we cannot reconcile them in one image, suggests that, as in Plato's myth of the cave, all that our rational mind can grasp is a shadow of a more-dimensioned reality. And this being the case, whatever the kind of map we make, it will distort reality into our fewer-dimensioned model.

Just as in an orthogonal projection of the earth's surface we have to sacrifice accuracy in the proportionality of areas and in a conic projection areas are more realistically depicted but directions are inexact, so with the world at large. Perhaps the best approximation of the truth that we can have is to be found in a multiplicity of points of view, since, as Kant concluded, direct apprehension of reality is beyond the reach of pure reason.

Some traditions have advocated the use of a single map, for the sake of clarity and concentration; however, the risk here is that of fanatic dogma. Others, to stress that the map is not the territory, prefer to use paradox, or, seemingly, the irrational way.

In the "irrationalistic" approach to understanding, in its mistrust of conceptual substitutes and its reliance on individual experience and creative discovery, we see an attitude that runs parallel to the affirmative, nonascetic and nondisciplinarian approach to action. The latter, too, stems from a reliance that "all desires are ultimately expressions of God's will," and the individual will find what is right for him without need of restraints. The equivalent approach in the domain of feelings is that of noninterventionist self-expression (the opposite of trying devotionalism), which relies on the assumption that the hidden feeling-truth of the individual will naturally actualize itself if it is only let out in an atmosphere of nonjudgmental acceptance.

These three approaches, taken together, constitute what the Hindus have sometimes called the left-hand path. One of its assumptions is that by developing his most developed aspect, the individual will come to the point of overflow and reach beyond his present state. Instead of reaching for transformation, the person is here prompted to accept what he is and follow his trend. "Cease striving," said Chuang Tze, "and self-transformation will ensue."[19] It is a philosophy of trust in self-nature, of surrender to the developmental wisdom of the organism, a spirit of feasting rather than fasting, as exemplified by the Hassidic Jews with their music and dancing, and in the rites of Tantric yoga. It is a "democratic" approach, in that it holds that "the kingdom of Heaven" is for everyone to find in his own heart and that the way is for each to find for himself. "The ways are as many"--runs a Sufi saying--"as the breaths in man."

It would seem that this "left-hand path" is the characteristic style of our times. Dynamic psychology from its beginning had some of this character in its concern with impulse-expression, and its trust in that change depended more on the patient's expression of himself than on external advice. From here, psychotherapy has been moving more and more away from the interpretive aspects of psychoanalysis and away from thinking in general, to an interest in the body.

Education, too, in the measure that it is "experiential," moves in the direction of greater trust in the autonomous development of the child when in the proper conditions. In the arts, all traditional patterns are being left aside in favor of the fresh discovery of reality in each moment. And, in the religious domain, there is a growing interest in the ways that do not provide answers but means for each to find them. This quality of following the inner guidance is true particularly of Zen and of the practice of nonthinking mediation in general.

The Way of Mindfulness

Thinking is of man's instruments and the most relevant tool to the act of knowing; yet the aim of knowing is beyond thinking, for it is the prerogative of the knower in us--our self, or, if we like, consciousness. The same may be said of the rest of the human mechanism. Doing may be a way of self-development, but the end of such development is not the programming of the human apparatus to this or that set of actions, but the development of the self, the doer.

The self cannot be divorced from its functions, but, paradoxically, doing, feeling, and thinking may become automatic operations divorced from the self. Thus, the ways to growth of the self may be conceived of as making all our activities our own--bringing ourselves into them, rather than being alienated from our actions, feelings, and thoughts. Selfhood gives every domain a transforming touch, as we know from our peak experiences and as we are told by those who have been so deeply touched by them that they felt inclined to express them in art, words, or deeds. Selfhood implies will; that is, the experience of one's self as the doer. This is what Kaiser[20] was concerned with when he claimed that neurotic patients are less responsible than normal individuals.

Selfhood, in the domain of feeling, is manifested as gratuitous joy and love, as the mystics have expressed. In thinking, selfhood first of all implies independent thought; that is, just as will and freedom operate in external actions, in the internal process of thinking "the thinker" becomes able to choose his own thoughts and tell them apart from the superimposed thinking of others. Thoughts, thus, become an independent translation of our contact with experience. Consequently, a person that "comes to himself" as a result of psychotherapy or other experiences may find that his vision of the world is changed and that what he formerly regarded as his thoughts were only "grafts" from parents or other significant others that had become automatic. Such "seeing with one's own eyes" is essentially a function of consciousness that is then interpreted, translated, and elaborated by thinking.

Consciousness is, perhaps, the most self-bound of our faculties. Nobody but the "I" in each of us can be conscious. Indeed, some metaphysical views hold that the self is consciousness and nothing but consciousness.

Since mindfulness can only be mindfulness of the ongoing experience, the way of consciousness is the same as that of self-insight, which in our Western civilization became explicit at the time of Socrates' injunctions of self-examination, and has culminated in the institution of psychotherapy.

Mindfulness to daily events and inner states is the embodiment of the way of consciousness in ordinary life, just as the precepts of the gods and faiths constitute embodiment of the ways of action, feeling, and knowledge. But just as in the other three ways there is place for special spiritual exercises (rituals, prayers, and meditations, for instance), there are exercises especially intended for the development of attention and consciousness. These might be collectively called "meditation," even though some forms of meditation may include an intellectual, feeling, or physical operation, aside from the exercising of awareness.

Though there seems to be no complete agreement as to exact definitions and boundaries, the practice of meditation may be generally considered to be subdivided into three distinct sets of exercises: (1) those requiring concentration on a single object, sensation, image, or question; (2) those of meditation proper, where the form is in attentive mental activity around a central issue; and (3) contemplation, where there is no object, aside from the spontaneous flow of experience or that of the special states of consciousness that may arise, in which "consciousness abides by itself."

Another contemplative approach that leads to the development of consciousness and thus to "meditation" is that through drugs. Primitive cultures are, in general, quite aware of their natural floral pharmacopoeia, and many of the drugs in our pharmacies are either extracts, synthetic analogs, or dervatives of age-old remedies. We are here interested in particular in the group of those that tend to induce altered states of consciousness. The common quality of such drugs is best conveyed by the original meaning of the much-maligned term "psychedelic" proposed by Dr. H. Osmond, meaning "mind-expanding." Such a quality is to bring into the focus of awareness aspects of the inner or outer reality that are not normally conscious--a slight shift in perception that may be experienced as either ecstatic or terrifying, according to the context of the situation and the person's psychological condition.

The use of plants containing such mind-changing substances has held a prominent role in certain cultures, and, in general, has been associated both with the initiations into adult life and with the initiation and training of shamans or medicine men. There probably has been a continuity between such shamanistic use and the more formulated ritual, sacrificial or eucharistic drinks mentioned in myths or accounts of early religions. Thus, Gordon Wasson[21] claims that the Haoma of the Zend-Avesta and the Soma drink of the Rig-Veda were both made of the halluciogenic Amanita Muscaria, and are still in use among Siberian nomads. The ancient

Egyptians certainly used psychedelic substances, as did the Greeks, the Persians, the post-Vedic Hindus, and the Chinese. I know of no pharmacological inquiry into the nature of the Norse's drink of immortality or the fruit of the druidic Golden Bough. The fourth chapter of Patanjali's Yoga-sutras (approximately 500 B.C.) begins: "Supernatural powers are obtained by birth, drugs, power of word, self-discipline, samādhi.[22]

Recently, we have been rediscovering the psychedelic substances used by humanity since times immemorial, but there might be occasion to wonder whether our use of them for the purpose of human growth is as understanding or sophisticated as that of the old religions or even the "primitive" shamans. There are indications that such drugs may affect conditioning in a way that in a somewhat metaphorical sense has been called reimprinting. And at least one study informs of their deliberate use in the educational setting as an "initiatory" means to awaken potential interests. It is interesting to note that A. Huxley, in the utopian view displayed in his last book,[23] presents the use of a psychedelic drug as part of a puberty ceremony, in accordance with a widespread Indian usage not well-documented by anthropology at the time of his writing.

The Role of Teachers or Helpers

According to Jung, "psychotherapy is not the simple straight forward method people at first believed it to be, but, as has gradually become clear, a kind of dialectical process, a dialogue or discussion between two persons"; and "We arrive at the dialectical formulation which tells us precisely that psychic interference is the reciprocal reaction of two psychic systems."[24]

P. W. Martin in his account of the Jungian 'technique' summarizes:[24]

> In a sense, as Jung has pointed out, technique is a somewhat misleading term to apply to the various psycho-perceptive

> methods used. It suggests a more or less automatic functioning. Actually, the constructive technique is in the main a matter of attitude. This is not to suggest that the methods employed are in any sense unimportant. On the contrary, for most people they are indispensable. But unless the basic attitude behind them is right, they will not work.

A basic fact underlying the function and need of helpers at some point in the growth process is that development of which we speak is that of an individual and, inasmuch as it is so, the development of each individual constitutes a unique "way." Paradoxically, the way for an individual being to reach universality is in the fulfillment of his individual nature, just as an artist deepens his vision of an individual form until the whole world seems to speak through it.

The teacher-therapist-guide is the person who, by virture of his own individual understanding of a system, may help another individual in this process of creative translation of the general into the particular, of the way into a given, unique way. Each individual, is, as it were, a variation on a universal theme, and a teacher is one with enough insight into the theme to know how the idea may become flesh and deed.

Since development is that of the self, the undeveloped person (most notably children) frequently attempts to find a missing center of judgment and decision in another. This makes the helping relationship one of authority, in which one person is in some measure giving power to another. It is the ultimate function of the teacher to return that power to the individual, guiding him to find in himself the "inner teacher" or authority that he is seeking outside. In practice, however, a guide acts as a temporary "substitute I," so that much of what happens in psychotherapy, for instance, constitutes, on the side of the patient, a crossing of limits: a going beyond himself, disruption of his ordinary patterns of behavior in terms of the demands of the therapist or the rules of the therapeutic relation. By obeying his externalized self (probably closer to his real self than is his disturbed personality), the individual thus becomes more receptive to his own self, his own deeper feelings and motivation that were always in him but which he would not listen to or follow. In religious terms, this is equivalent to the statement that God is always present, but we are not ready to give ourselves to Him.

The above notion may shed some light on the weight that some Eastern schools give to a strict obedience to a guru. A guru is one who is closer to God than the disciple; therefore, obedience to him is the closest available means of being obedient to God.

Thus, Meher Baba writes:[25]

Love is a gift from God to man.
Obedience is a gift from Master to man.
Surrender is a gift from man to Master.

One who loves desires the will of the Beloved.
One who obeys does the will of the Beloved.
One who surrenders knows nothing but the will of the Beloved.

Love seeks union with the Beloved.
Obedience seeks the pleasure of the Beloved.
Surrender sseks nothing.

One who loves is the lover of the Beloved.
One who obeys is the beloved of the Beloved.
One who surrenders has no existence other than the Beloved.

Greater than love is obedience.
Greater than obedience is surrender.
All three arise out of, and remain contained in, the Ocean
  of divine Love.

It may be interesting to consider here David Bakan's thesis that Freud's "interpretation of dreams" originated in Freud's acquaintance with a trait in Jewish mysticism that is much in the spirit of the above quotation.[26] To the Hassidim, the Zadik (spiritual guide) was, like in the other traditions, a representative of God, and therefore he was studied by his disciples. And every act of his being was interpreted in terms of its ultimate significance as a message. What Freud did, according to Bakan, was to democratize the process of interpretation, so that he took the methods applied to the holy texts and the person of the master and applied them to every man's soul.

Much more could be said of the function of a personal relationship in the context of the educational, therapeutic, or spiritual process. For instance, the whole issue may be seen as one in which relationships in general are transformed (interpersonal and intrapersonal) by means of the transformation, healing or completion being achieved in the form of one given relationship. Such a view may be useful to hold in mind in order not to forget the nonverbal and nonintellectual factors involved in the process. This may be best understood if we think of the legacy of a good mother-child or father-child relationship, or a successful therapeutic relationship. The principle may also be important in the relationship with a spiritual guide. It may be illuminating to consider the following biographic passage from Lama Angarika Govinda concerning his initiation:[27]

> The moment we try to analyse, to conceptualise, or to rationalise the details and experiences of initiation, we are dealing only with dead fragments, but not with the living flow of force, which is expressed in the Tibetan word "dam-ts'hig," the inner relationship between Guru and Chela and the spontaneous movement, emotion, and realisation on which this relationship is based.

And later:[28]

> What is communicable are only those experiences that belong to the plane of our mundane consciousness, and beyond this we may be able to speak about the results and conclusions to which our experiences have led us. . .

It would seem that just as life proceeds from life, the spark of individuality can only be struck from an accomplished individual, and only an awakened one can wake up a sleeping man. What is the nature of such spiritual influence? Certainly, there is in it an element of learning by subtle imitation. As a musician may learn from a greater performer, a great man may rediate something of his spirit in manifestations as subtle as his breathing, gait, or tone of voice, and a true disciple will contact the spirit rather than imitate the outward form. Yet perhaps the wisest thing that we can do is leave the question partly open and not answer with a "nothing but."

The logical consequence of the role of relationships in the growth process is to bring a note of doubt into the final effectiveness of systems when divorced from a person with a living understanding of the process on which they impinge, and even from teachers or therapists with a purely technical or mechanical understanding of a procedure. When it comes to the goal of development, it seems that the most crucial qualification for the one in the helping position is the degree of his own personal development--a fact too often forgotten in a fact-oriented education. If education as an institution is to profit from the assimilation of resources of other cultures, or areas of endeavour that are relevant to its aims, the first step in that assimilation would actually be the exposure of teachers to the experience of such resources and ways.

IV A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SOME UNDERLYING PROCESSES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The purpose of the following pages is to discuss what may be regarded as an experiential meeting ground of the many diverse techniques, exercises, and procedures that contribute to the "unfolding of man." If the ultimate ends of psychiatry, religion, and education converge, we should be able to find that similar processes take place as a result of their respective methods, however different these may appear at first glance.

In contrast to the previous chapters in this essay, which approached the commonality among the ways of growth from the standpoint of style (inner- or outer-directed), goal (healing, development, or enlightenment), or means (the cultivation of action, feeling, understanding, or awareness), this chapter will be concerned with the experiences elicited by the practice of the different ways of growth. Since it is with the domain of experience that most therapeutic systems and other inward arts are explicitly concerned, we would be missing the point if, in our eagerness to be objective, we were to bypass the subjective reality inherent in the disciplines that we are studying. It is within this domain of subjectivity that I will attempt to show the processes that compose the various ways of growth.

In dealing with the phenomenology of change from the point of view of different issues on processes such as those listed below, I am not implying that these are basically different or independent. To the contrary, they may be better understood as facets or manifestations of a single change process, which cannot be approached except through such aspects.

Granted that there is a measure of arbitrariness in attempting to separate the following aspects from the whole and limiting our list to this particular set, I propose that we may understand the process of psychological healing-enlightenment-development from the following points of view:

- Shift in identity
- Increased contact with reality
- Increase in detachment and responsibility
- Increased unity
- Increase in freedom and the ability to surrender
- Increased self-acceptance
- Increased self-awareness

In dealing with each of these, I will briefly review the acknowledgement that the issue has received in psychology and in the mystical traditions and illustrate the relevance of such processes to the understanding of particular disciplines or methods.

Shift In Identity

The notion of a self-image for the understanding of personality disorders has loomed large in psychoanalysis. One of the most articulate developments of this view in the theory of neurosis is presented by Karen Horney in her last book, Neurosis and Human Growth.[28] She states that a human being, like a seed, brings into the world some potentialities, but needs for his development certain environmental conditions. These are rarely met, because they depend on parental attitudes, and parents are affected by neuroses that are part of the culture itself. The reaction of the child to surroundings that fall short of meeting its needs is "basic anxiety"--the feeling of being in a potentially hostile environment. The reaction to anxiety is "ensuring" security by manipulation of the environment. This may be done in three ways: by moving against people, fighting for one's needs; by moving toward people, to secure the protection of a powerful provider, in symbiotic attachment; or by moving away from people for safety and finding the maximum resources in one's self.

According to conditions and innate predisposition, one of these strategies will be more suitable than the others, and out of a need for consistency it will be chosen as the main ingredient in the style of relating. But in every given situation, there will be conflict between the three reaction patterns, and the anxiety behind all three needs will make choice a rigid matter.

Now conflict adds to insecurity. To minimize conflict, reactions other than the dominant one become repressed. The assertive person rejects all feelings and promptings, e.g., to submit, while the withdrawing type will repress both dominance and dependence. All this is evidenced as an impoverishment in personality and a restriction of spontaneity. The "solution" is to compensate for this impoverishment and insecurity by idealizing the dominant solution. Thus, the meek one feels proud of his gentleness and loving concern for others, regarding all hostility as "evil"; the dominant type idealizes courage, force, directness, and so forth, repressing everything "soft," "weak," "needful"; and the detached type creates, as a support for his behavior, the "virtues" of serenity, reserve, independence, and so on. What was a need has become a virtue, and from now on life consists in living up to these virtues--and avoiding their opposites.

What Freud saw as "introjection" of parental commands and values is for Horney a more autonomous process by which the individual creates his own commands--using or not using the parental models. In any case, such a process is a compulsive one, stemming from being cornered by life, and ending up in "the tyranny of the should." Whenever the person lives up to his system of "shoulds" he feels proud; when not, self-hate ensues, conscious or not. And subsequently self-hate becomes chronic, since the "shoulds" are impossible to satisfy in their absoluteness. The person's real feelings, thoughts, and urges cannot possibly fit in with the rigid idealization of the self, so that these are estranged. Thus, by meeting his personal standards of glory, the person loses his true self.

The analogy of a "true self" covered up by a mask that the person mistakes for his true identity is found in Jung's concepts of self and "persona." His proposed polarities of persona shadow and ego self will not be discussed here. For the present purposes, it is enough to consider only his notion of "persona,"* which is that of a mask shown to the world. Jung does not state that it would be desirable to drop such a mask; on the contrary, he recognizes that a mask has protective and adaptive functions that could be compared to those of a healthy skin. What he sees as unnecessary and undesirable is the pervasive identification of people with their masks or roles. To the question of "who am I," many will probably answer with "a lawyer, an engineer, a middle-aged, middle-class American," and so on, and, as such, they will experience themselves in their everyday lives, rather than out of the unlabeled totality of their being. Jung's "self" is not another aspect or fragment of the personality, but only another psychological "center of gravity"; in contrast, a person identifying with the "persona" believes that this part of him is his whole psychological reality. Much the same idea is expressed by the well-known metaphor* that many of us live in only one room of our house, while this house might be actually a palace, with towers, salons, and gardens. We lock ourselves in the kitchen or perhaps in the cellar, believing that this is the whole house.

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* The term derives from per-sonare, to sound through, and was used for the masks used in Greek drama.

It may be well to keep in mind a distinction between two uses ordinarily given to the word "identification." In speaking of identification with a social role, for example, we usually mean the substitution of our own experience (or its restriction) to that compatible with such a role, much like the artist, who forgets his everyday self while he identifies with his dramatic persona. This way, too, children or grownups identify with parents, teachers, con-men.

In contrast to this identification, which is a substitution for another, is one where the other (person, symbol, object, thought) acts like a vehicle for the expression and unfolding of the self. This takes place spontaneously in the course of life and is difficult to separate from the other form of identification. Significant persons (parents, teachers, admired ones) may become models in a way that is not compulsive and limiting but merely organizing, so that the individual assimilates stylistic elements of others as means for his own expression. This is the same process by which the great artist blends into his style the elements of his tradition, without being limited to them.

The process under discussion may be understood as that of experiencing one's self in the guise of others. For what is appreciated in the other and imitated is regarded from the beginning as the tendency of the self; i.e.; what is assimilated in one's own projection.

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* An elaboration on it may be found in Ouspenski's "The Fourth Way."[29]

The idea of a shift in identity appears again, in different forms, in Gestalt therapy. Most central is the notion of "disowning" aspects of the personality, a condition that is achieved by narrowing the boundaries of the ego. By drawing a boundary between what we call I and not-I in our processes, we give up responsibility, but we also become impoverished. The assumption in Gestalt therapy is that all that "happens" in us is our doing. Yet, it is not the doing of the ego at the moment--the particular personality fragment saying "I" in the name of the whole. It is the doing of our organism--the interdependent totality of our processes--and in the measure that we take responsibility for it, become aware of how we do it, we become our organism, our totality. Analogously, in Jungian terms, we become what we already are, unknowingly.

It is interesting to compare the analytic, Jungian, and Gestalt ways to the self. Analysis proper is destructive, whether in psychotherapy or other domains. It is a process of taking apart from which it is expected that reorganization may occur. Like a sculptor who brings out a form from a rock just by taking away what does not belong in it, the analyst is letting the inner man emerge by removing obstacles; or rather, by letting these melt in the fire of consciousness. In speaking of an "emergence" of the inner, I do not necessarily mean expression in action, which is already a consequence, but emergence into consciousness, which amounts to a waking up of the self, knowing it as it is, rather than believing it to be what it "should" be.

Jung's approach to the self is not essentially analytical, in spite of the label of "analytical psychology" borne by his school. As early as 1935, Jung stated: "Silberer distinguishes between the psychoanalytic and the anagogic interpretation, while I distinguish between the analytic-reductive and the synthetic-hermeneutic interpretation."[30]

Jung's strategy is essentially that of illuminating ordinary experience in the light of the mythical, or, to put it more appropriately, letting the mythical light shine forth through the trivial. Instead of pointing out the inconsequential, the abortive, regressive, and negative aspects of life and dreams, he attempts to show that in every bit of ordinary existence there lie the great laws, the great symbols, the great issues. Thus, he underlines the transcendent in the apparently accidental, and facilitates the emergence of the "archetypal" by nourishing it with its own reflection. If analysis is a removing of obstacles, a killing of the false images of self that obstruct the awareness of self-reality, Jung's approach is that of coaxing the awareness of the self by presenting it with a mirror in the therapist's observations and the mythical themes that speak of man's core of common experience.

In Gestalt therapy the main approach to "re-assimilating the disowned" is perhaps that of enacting one's involuntary processes. By voluntarily doing that which is automatic in us, we establish--or rediscover--a link between the process and ourselves. By acting out a character in a dream, for example, we may discover that this was a projection, i.e., only an illusory "other," and it contacted that core of our experience that was expressing itself indirectly through such otherness. Likewise, in any spontaneous movement--a rocking in the chair, a nod, a smile--by "becoming" them and giving them a voice, we may find that we are only becoming what we already are: somebody wanting to do all that, choosing to do so, and finding some satisfaction in it, rather than remaining a passive "victim" of such occurrences.

These two therapeutic processes, [1] one in which the alternative to identification with a self-image is the experiencing of the self, and [2] one in which direct contact with one's reality, rather than a substitution of a "better" self-image in place of the old one, need some further elaboration. Consequently, I will discuss the contrast between these views, since the latter is at the root of at least one therapeutic system (Maltz' Psychocybernetics,[31] and is a view commonly expressed in less systematic terms.

Maltz' claim is that our self-image (i.e., what we believe we are) is usually not conducive to successful living. And if we can change our self-perception (through autosuggestion) toward greater appreciation, this can have a positive influence on our behavior.[31] Supportive psychotherapy is also based on the assumption that approval leads to greater self-acceptance and that this has repercussions that go beyond momentary pleasure. Now, principally, self-acceptance leads to increased self-expression (less censorship) and the latter to self-discovery and the tasting of one's identity. One self-image or another may be more or less conducive to an openness to experience, just as the belief in man's intrinsic goodness or badness leads to alternative styles in the raising of children and education.

A shift in identity is necessary in the change of self-image, but it is not this shift that is the outcome of effective psychotherapy, the productive religious pursuit, or the ideal education. Openness to experience that depends on a preconception of the self does not make a person free. Such a preconception may be used as a crutch, a device, but still falls short of the aim: a condition where openness to experience is unconditional and constitutes its own reward.

A child growing up in an atmosphere of blame will take on a picture of himself as essentially bad, and, under this conviction, will never allow himself to look into his reality, which could show him his mistake. Conversely, a child who grows up in an atmosphere of acceptance feels free to experience himself and be as he is, and in the process he comes to know, moment after moment, whether he is adequate or not. Similarly, a patient in a supportive setting may begin to unfold and discover his real self, which was hidden by his preconceptions of himself. There will always be a self-image in the sense of self-perception, but not in the sense of identity. The truly mature person does not need the assurance of being this or that and having to prove it, mainly because he does not deceive himself into believing that he is this or that. The power of our self-image arises, as Horney brilliantly displays,[28] in the fact that we really believe (mostly unconsciously) in our own perfection, and we are therefore vulnerable to everything in ourselves (or others) that may contradict our self-idealization.

The opposite of the dependence on and identification with a self-image is the openness to perceive and accept whatever our reality be at the moment. Our reality at the moment is our experience. We cannot know the Kantian "things in themselves," but our experience of ourselves and the world is something that we can either accept (i.e., experience consciously) or reject, repress, disown.

In his book, The Politics of Experience, Laing makes a statement that may be taken as a definition of psychiatry:[32]

> I am a specialist, God help me, in events in inner space and time, in experiences called thoughts, images, reveries, dreams, visions, hallucinations, dreams of memories, memories of dreams, memories of visions, dreams of hallucinations, refractions of refractions of that original Alpha and Omega of experience and reality, that Reality on whose repression, denial, splitting, projection, falsification on, and general desecration and profanation our civilization as much as on anything is based.

Turning from the psychological literature to that of mysticism, we find a similar acknowledgement of a process that entails a shattering of the self-image and the realization of "who we truly are." Such a process is at the heart of the so-called mystical death and rebirth in which the outer man ceases to be and the inner man is born. The "death" aspect is conveyed by the Buddhist notion of extinction, Nirvana (which, paradoxically, signifies a transcendence of death), the Christian notion of "death in Christ," or the Moslem notion of Fana-if-Illah (extinction into God). The rebirth aspect is already implied in these, for Nirvana is conceived as Mukti, liberation. Extinction of individuality in God means the recognition that God is what we truly are, while we deceive ourselves into believing that we are individual masks. Our true being is "Christ in us" (St. Paul). Every human being is the Buddha, without knowing it. Though the word "rebirth" is true to the quality of the experience, its nature is more that of an awakening to the realization of the nature of the self.

The difference between the psychological and the religious ways of defining the self is that, for the former, the experience of "self" is just that of an individual entity (presentation of organismic events to consciousness), whereas the religious view goes beyond. It tells us that whoever truly "sees into his being" (Kensho, in Zen) and realizes his identity will find that his self is a drop in an infinite ocean of existence, that he is a microcosm replicating the whole macrocosm, that his soul (Atman) is one with the soul of everything (Brahma), and that, truly, there is nothing but a oneness of everything (which may or may not be called God), under the illusion of individual existence.

Alan Watts has, throughout his works, reformulated these views in terms more familiar to the scientific style of our ages. He sums it up in The Book:[33]

> Most of us have the sensation that "I myself" is a separate center of feeling and action, living inside and bounded by the physical body--a center which "confronts" an "external" world of people and things, making contact through the senses with a universe both alien and strange. Everyday

> figures of speech reflect this illusion. "I came into this world." "You must face reality." "The conquest of nature."
>
> This feeling of being lonely and very temporary visitors in the universe is in flat contradiction to everything known about man (and all other living organisms) in the sciences. We do not "come into" this world; we come out of it, as leaves from a tree. As the ocean "waves," the universe "people." Every individual is an expression of the whole realm of nature, a unique action of the total universe.
>
> This fact is rarely, if ever, experienced by most individuals. Even those who know it to be true in theory do not sense or feel it but continue to be aware of themselves as isolated "egos" inside bags of skin.
>
> The first result of this illusion is that our attitude to the world "outside" us is largely hostile. We are forever "conquering" nature, space, mountains, deserts, bacteria, and insects instead of learning to cooperate with them in a harmonious order.

Attempts like Watts' make the mystical view understandable to us as not merely the outcome of a special subjective state, but as stemming from a grasp on objective reality. However this may be, we must not forget that both religious and psychiatric ideas are not so much the outcome of speculation as the formulation of experiences. The notion of a self in psychological writing reflects the experience of such in persons who have undergone the therapeutic process, just as the religious conception of the self is the reflection of the mystical experience.

The question that poses itself is whether these two experiences--that of healing and that of mystical union--are different in the sense of belonging to different domains, or just different stages in a single change-process--steps in the same direction. If the latter were true, we might conceive that the experience of psychological integration--the finding of the real self--might be a preliminary step before entering the domain of mystical experiences, crowned by the realization that "I and my Father are one." Perhaps we still need time to obtain the final answer in this matter, but there seems to be a growing trend of opinion toward the last alternative. Contemporary psychotherapists see more and more of the relevance of the Eastern disciplines. Many of these disciplines' greatest representatives are sharing this belief, in that they may be speaking of the more advanced steps in man's single path of evolution. Jung, for instance, writes in his commentary to the Tibetan Book of the Dead:[13]

> The only 'initiation process' that is still alive and practised today in the West is the analysis of the unconscious as used by doctors for therapeutic purposes. This penetration into the ground-layers of consciousness is a kind of rational maieutics in the Socratic sense, a bringing forth of psychic contents that are still germinal, subliminal, and as yet unborn. Originally, this therapy took the form of Freudian psychoanalysis and was mainly concerned with sexual fantasies. This is the realm that corresponds to the last and lowest region of the Bardo, known as the Sidpa Bardo, where the dead man, unable to profit by the teachings of the Chikhai and Chonyid Bardo, begins to fall a prey to sexual fantasies and is attracted by the vision of mating couples. Eventually he is caught by a womb and born into the earthly world again. Meanwhile, as one might expect, the Oedipus complex starts functioning. If his karma destines him to be reborn as a man he will fall in love with his mother-to-be and will find his father hateful and disgusting. Conversely, the future daughter will be highly attracted by her father-to-be and repelled by her mother. The European passes through this specifically Freudian domain when his unconscious contents are brought to light under analysis, but he goes in the reverse direction. He journeys back through the world of infantile-sexual fantasy to the womb. It has even been suggested in psychoanalytical circles that the trauma par excellence is the birth-experience itself--nay more, psychoanalysts even claim to have probed back to memories of intrauterine origin. Here Western reason reaches its limit, unfortunately. I say 'unfortunately,' because one rather wishes that Freudian psychoanalysis could have happily pursued these so-called intra-uterine experiences still further back; had it succeeded in this bold untertaking,

> it would surely have come out beyond the Sidpa Bardo and penetrated from behind into the lower reaches of the Chonyid Bardo.

Freudian psychoanalysis, in all essential aspects, never went beyond the experiences of the Sidpa Bardo; that is, it was unable to extricate itself from sexual fantasies and similar "incompatible" tendencies that cause anxiety and other affective states. Nevertheless, Freud's theory is the first attempt made by the West to investigate, as if from below, from the animal sphere of instinct, the psychic territory that corresponds in Tantric Lamaism to the Sidpa Bardo. A very justifiable fear of metaphysics prevented Freud from penetrating into the sphere of the "occult."

In addition to this, the Sidpa state, if we are to accept the psychology of the Sidpa Bardo, is characterized by the fierce wind of dharma, which whirls the dead man along until he comes to the "womb-door." In other words, the Sidpa state permits of no going back, because it is sealed off against the Chonyid state by an intense striving downwards, towards the animal sphere of instinct and physical rebirth. That is to say, anyone who penetrates into the unconscious with purely biological assumptions will become stuck in the instinctual sphere and be unable to advance beyond it, for he will be pulled back again and again into physical existence. It is therefore not possible for Freudian theory to reach anything except an essentially negative valuation of the unconscious. It is a "nothing but." At the same time, it must be admitted that this view of the psyche is typically Western, only it is expressed more blatantly, more plainly, and more ruthlessly than others would have dared to express it, though at bottom they think no differently. As to what "mind" means in this connection, we can only cherish the hope that it will carry conviction. But, as even Max Scheler noted with regret, the power of this "mind" is, to say the least of it, doubtful.

I think, then, that I can state it as a fact that, with the aid of psychoanalysis, the rationalizing mind of the West has pushed forward into what one might call the neuroticism of the Sidpa state, and has there been brought to an inevitable standstill by the uncritical assumption that everything psychological is subjective and personal. Even so, this advance has been a great gain, inasmuch as it has enabled us to take one more step behind our conscious lives. This knowledge also gives us a hint of how we ought to read the Bardo Thodol--that is, backwards. If, with the help of our Western science, we have to some extent succeeded in understanding the psychological character of the Sidpa Bardo, our next task is to see if we can make anything of the preceding Chonyid Bardo.

Aside from an understanding of commonality that may arise from the refining of psychological notions about the change-process, we also have more information to consider. Maslow's investigation of peak experiences, for instance, is having great impact on our understanding of the nature of sanity,[34] and Grof's group in Czechoslovakia has presented challenging information as to what happens when psychedelic therapy is carried beyond the moment when the change process satisfies the ordinary standards of mental health.[35]

Regardless of whether we prefer the secular or the religious formulation of the self--whether or not we see mystical overtones in the nature of the experience of ourselves when liberated, i.e., not obstructed by our imagination and our preconception--let us now look at some instances of "ways of growth" and see what we can see in them, in terms of the identity shift that we are discussing.

Let us first consider a method that is not only one of the oldest, but one that has been explicitly pursued for the purpose of "seeing into one's self." This is a form of meditation found mostly in the

Buddhist countries that consists of "watching" the stream of consciousness, without interfering with its flow. Alan Watts describes this process as follows:[36]

> It is the ability to retain one's normal and everyday consciousness and at the same time to let go of it. That is to say, one begins to take an objective view of the stream of thoughts, impressions, feelings, and experiences that constantly flows through the mind. Instead of trying to control and interfere with it, one simply lets it flow as it pleases. But whereas consciousness normally lets itself be carried away by the flow, in this case the important thing is to watch the flow without being carried away.

Other approaches in meditation may be understood from a similar point of view. There is, for instance, the form where the task is that of nondoing, rather than that of mindfulness.

"Most of you are beginners, so it may be rather different for you to understand why we practice ZaZen or meditation in this way," said Suzuki Roshi at a session in San Francisco in December 1966. "We always say, 'just sit.' And if you do, you will find that Zen practice--just to sit--is not easy. Just to sit may be the most difficult thing. To work on something is not different; but not to work on anything is rather difficult.[37]

In trying not to do anything, the first thing that the meditator will probably have to "do" is to stop trying. The issue will take him into paradoxical situations: thinking is a deviation from the assignment of not doing, but so is any attempt to prevent the arising of thoughts. The way out, again is nothing that he can do. There is one, but it is in the nature of a realization, or a shift in point of view. It lies in the discovery that from the very beginning he has not done anything, and there is nothing he can do, however much he tries, because "He truly is a field of consciousness in which processes take place. Thoughts occur, feelings arise, things happen, but the self is like a space in which they take place, unimpeded. According to Chuary-Tze, "The perfect man employs his mind as a mirror; it grasps nothing, it refuses nothing, it receives but it does not keep.[37]

In a translation of Wei-lang,[38] it is explained that the everyday ego that "does" is only an illusion, an illusion of separateness clinging to an illusion of doing, where there is actually only the universal flow of cause-effect in events. If there is such a thing as a "self"--a "me", or "you"--it is either that stream of events itself (which cannot do but just is) or something more like a no-thingness in which it flows. We say that the essence of mind is great because it embraces all things, since all things are within our nature. When we see the goodness or the badness of other people, we are not attracted by, nor repelled by it, nor attached to it; our attitude of mind is a void as space. In this way, we say our mind is great. Therefore, we call it "Maha."

What has been said of the above two kinds of approaches may also be applied to most other meditations. For instance, everything in the nature of an attempt to control the mind will lead to the realization that "I" cannot do so. Only "it" controls itself. To control it, I must stop being my "little ego" and become one with my organismic process, my self-regulated self.

But now let us turn to a more contemporary discipline. The process of free association was introduced by Freud in his clinical practice as an essentially exploratory measure. Subsequently, throughout the history of psychoanalysis, more importance has been given to the therapist's interpretations and their illuminating power than to the patient's activity in the analytical process. Actually, the process of free association is not very different from that of meditation, in that it entails constant watchfulness on one's stream of mental events.

One of the differences is that it requires the translation of awareness into words and a certain stress in the conceptual and imagining domains of mental activity. To look at free association from a point of view different from the traditional one, I suggest that we first look at some practices that may at first sight seem quite unrelated.

There is an exercise practices in Asian countries that consists of watching the breath without interfering with its natural rhythm. This is easy to say, but not to do. When unaware of breathing, our metencephalic centers manage to regulate its flow with great natural wisdom. But as soon as we pay attention to it, we also take control. Our ego cannot just watch and let be; it has to do everything. The exercise is naturally one of letting the animal in us express itself in full awareness, so that we can at the same time be spontaneous and self-conscious.

The challenge of this situation is familiar to us in our experience of movement. We can either be spontaneous "behind our backs," so to speak, as in ordinary walking, writing, and laughing, or we are self-consciously unspontaneous. Thus, when "I" is watching, my "natural being" recoils, and my behavior depends on my conscious programming rather than the richness of my organismic integration. The situation is particularly well-known to students of musical instruments, who frequently find that their expressiveness diminishes during periods of intensive dedication to the technicalities, such as fingering, skips, tension or relaxation, and so on. And even more than musicians, actors are aware of the need to integrate the spontaneous and technical intentionality, and there are schools of acting that emphasize either one or the other extreme.

The domain of movement taken as that of the challenge of being one's self and yet being aware has been cultivated most systematically in Japanese archery, Zen painting, and calligraphy. Herrigel, in his Zen in the Art of Archery,[39] describes his own training process in Japan and tells how there came a moment when the experience of "I shoot" switched to that of "it shoots." In other words, it was not his conscious and rational calculating ego that was controlling the process, but another kind of functioning was taking place that allowed for a more complete participation of his faculties. However, before he was able to achieve this, he asked his Master what the "it" was in the shooting of the arrow. The teacher replied that when he would know that, he would be a Master himself. We may understand the change process as one by which he had, at least in the task of archery, become "it." The identity of the doer had shifted from ego to self.

After looking at the breathing exercise and its counterpart in the medium of movement, we may take a further step away from the body and consider what the equivalent of this exercise would be in the domain of thinking. It would constitute watching the thought process without interfering with it, which precisely amounts to the task of free association. I stress the word "free," because the so-called free association in actual fact is rarely a successful attempt. Moreover, much of the analytical process consists in the interpretation of resistance to such free association. I think that one of the fundamental statements in the history of psychoanalysis is that of Ferenzi , to the effect that the ability to free-associate may be considered a criterion for termination of analysis. This is similar to the previously described case of Zen archery. The psychoanalytic patient is required to do (as a means for his cure) what he cannot possibly do. In essence, this request is for him to stop doing; to get out of his own way. Moreover, to achieve it, in a way, he is to stop as a being, that is, he is to stop being the manipulator of this thoughts; and he is to open up to his thinking process as it proceeds when he does not direct it.

Experience shows that the outcome is not chaos--quite the contrary. But, after all, our dreams are not chaotic, and they occur when our ego is asleep. The self has its structure and style, just like our physical organs, our hands, or our noses, but we do not usually trust it, and we introduce a preconceived order that stems from our self-image and its concerns. We think what and how we believe we should think. In letting go of the self-image, letting it die in us, our true thinking is born.

What the psychoanalytic formula of free association is to thinking, the guided reverie is to imagery. There again, the issue is creatively to let the dream unfold and yet be awake in it. And we may discern the same process in other domains of improvisational theater and Subud. The practice of the latter, derived from dervish tradition, is the least structured of all, and that may account for its potential intensity. It constitutes an attempt to fulfill a surrender to God's will, as the person best understands it, and therefore it amounts to an emptying the mind of preconceptious and "shoulds" and restraints. Letting go of attempts at controlling one's behavior and being open to the emergence of the unknown--what it wills. In the process, "I" becomes "it," or momentarily disappears to let it be.

The case of psychedelic substances is almost too obvious to require much comment. Early in the experimentation with these substances, the users described the occurrence of death-rebirth experiences resembling those in mystic literature, and the term "ego-loss" has become a standard one in the description of reactions to LSD. It would seem that different drugs may temporarily suppress one or another aspect of the controling and censoring mechanisms to which our ordinary sense of identity is linked, so that the person may experience his reality beyond the ordinary self-concept. Curiously, the resulting experience of the self, "when the doors of perception are cleansed," easily leads into the experience of oneness with other beings or forms of life, and this into the mystical realm.

The notions in this section--that of a self to be experienced and that of a self-image or self-concept that must "die" in the change process--are more or less familiar to the practitioners of any of the disciplines discussed thus far. If such notions are adequate to explain the unitary process of change, they should also be suitable as a model for what happens in a system not inspired by such ideas. I think that one of the approaches that is most remote from such concepts in its explicit formulations is behavior therapy, so that we may well turn to it and see what the relevance of the self-image is to its procedures.

The behavior therapist is concerned with the treatment of symptoms, and to him the symptoms are the disease. Symptoms arise from associations established (in the individual's past history) between certain stimuli or situations and pain, anxiety, or discomfort, so that every time the said situation is met it gives rise to one of these inappropriate responses. The task of the therapist is therefore to dissociate a given stimulus from the patient's undesirable "response," which he accomplishes by means of deconditioning or reconditioning him. He presents the patient with the unpleasant stimulus or situation in increasing degrees of proximity while he at the same time presents him something pleasurable that may compete with the anxiety or disgust being elicited. After repeated presentations of the avoided stimulus, experience tells us that it will arouse less and less anxiety, until eventually the patient's reaction becomes normal.

If the scope of behavior therapy were just that of curing isolated symptoms, it would hardly deserve to be placed next to systems whose goal is a transformation of personality. Yet the dimensions of the unit that we can call a symptom, as well as the nature of the stimulus, may vary within wide limits. Thus, the idea that may be applied to the treatment of a fear of open spaces or water may also be applied to a fear of authoritarian figures, of women, or of sexual arousal.

The "stimulus" in the latter instance is not external, but internal: the person's perception of his own motivation (i.e., anger) physical state (i.e., sexual arousal), which has been linked in his past experience with fear or guilt. Whenever the "stimulus" aspect of the symptom is a process taking place in the individual, rather than an object in the external world, the issue of therapy is equivalent to one of personality transformation.

When the behavioral therapist is dealing with this domain, though, where the unit of disturbance is that of certain types of motivation, fantasy, feeling, or thinking that have become taboo, he is exactly in the same domain that may be conceptualized as a restriction of experiencing in terms of a set of "shoulds" or inner commands. In fact, we may broaden the conception of symptom to the limit in speaking of a "fear to be one's self," and deal with this situation directly in the context of conditioning, rewarding, self-expression, and punishing what deviates from it. The link between the behavioristic formulation of neurosis and the psychodynamic, when it comes to the more encompassing levels of symptomatology, amounts to that between the notion of conditioned anxiety and the internalized prohibition that is at the core of all "defenses." But let us now turn to the actual practice of behavior therapy and see how we may understand its effectiveness in terms of its bearing on the self-image.

The self-concept regulates all avoidances. Whatever does not match the ego's requirements becomes a threat to its definition of itself. It is thus that certain experiences (like anger, typically) and the situations that give rise to them come to be feared: they are experienced by the self-image-attached ego as a threat to its very identity or existence as such. Their catastrophic connotations bespeak death to the ego, as it is. Differently said, the person feels as if he were to die to the extent that he is believing himself to be his self-image (a product of fantasy), rather than contacting his own experience.

Let us consider what happens as an avoided situation is experienced with increasing directness in the context of treatment, in a favorable, relaxed situation provided by the therapist's reassurances, with probable additional rewards. The behavior therapist assumes that a new conditioned response is being established, whereby the situation that is part of the symptom becomes associated with the rewards presented by the therapist. Yet it is unlikely that a new conditioned response strong enough to replace the old one may arise from "positive reinforcements" as mild as a state of relaxation or the therapist's approval.

Let us then propose the following alternative interpretation: The rewards supplied by the therapeutic context do not become part of a new conditioned response, but are just enough to counteract for the moment the confrontation of the unpleasantness aroused by the symptom arousing stimulus. The value of such neutralization or support then leads the patient to confront the avoided, and through the process of such confrontation the patient learns that he was wrong in fearing. Anxieties are ordinarily perpetuated by the avoidance of the situation that originated them; for in this way there is no chance of learning that there is nothing to fear. All that is required for this realization is the ability, the courage, and perhaps the support to confront the matter.

In terms of learning theory, what happens then is the extinction of a conditioned response, not the building up of a new one. And, in more general terms, the patient is acquiring more openness to experience--conditioned responses--in the process of extinction of his past conditionings. To the extent that his conditioning has been at the level of the self-image, he is not merely changing his self-image but becoming free of one, as his responses become relevant to the present qualities in the situation rather than fantasies or predictions stemming from the past. In stating this, I am implying that the process of change is not just one of altered "programming" of behavior or feelings, but one of greater freedom from programmed responses, i.e., greater creative choice.

Whether this interpretation is correct or not, I think it will be appropriate to consider at this point that the two approaches of widely divergent backgrounds---behavior therapy and meditation--are quite similar, when considered in terms of the experience of the person exposed to them. The most common situation in both is one in which the reward is a state of rest and relaxation, and against this background the patient evokes anxiety-eliciting situations in fantasy. In many forms of meditation, too, the body is kept in a state of relaxation, and when the mind is allowed to wander, it naturally leads to the unresolved conflict-laden areas that press for attention. Thus, what happens in the course of time is that fantasies and reminiscences are contemplated in a state of lucidity, and the person's reactions toward them change.

Increased Contact with Reality

If we look into the most blatant forms of mental disease, there can hardly be any question as to its delusional quality. Both in the sphere of thinking and in that of perception, the psychotic patient displays a feeble grasp of reality. Nevertheless, delusional thinking is by no means exclusively psychotic. It is as much a part of neurotic symptoms or characterologic patterns, only it is less obvious as such, for it is implicit in feelings or behavior.

Freud has spoken of neurosis as an anachronism, in the sense that the individual responds to his environment in a way that was once adequate (in his childhood) but has ceased to be realistic. Many of our perceptions of the events around us are anachronistic in this way. Our apperceptions, expectations, and fantasies concerning others are not quite realistic but are tinged by childish views that have become fixed in us. For instance, we may continue to perceive ourselves as in need of support when we no longer need to depend on the adult world; we may be afraid of authority figures just as we were afraid of parental disapproval, or see all women as "devouring," and so on.

In fact, all neurotic behavior may be conceived as stemming from a misperception of reality on which are superimposed illusory threats. If this is not obvious, it is because in a neurosis, as distinct from a psychosis, the individual has two alternative views of the world: one delusional, which is implicit and controls behavior; the other more or less realistic, which is explicit and conscious but is dissociated from the field of action and motivation. Such pervasive and implicit distortions in the perception of the world that occur in the emotional disturbances are acknowledged in many notions throughout psychotherapeutic literature, such as Horney's "unrealistic demands," Ellis' "wrong propositions," and the view of "reality-testing" as one of the attributes of mental health, a frequent item in the writing of ego psychologists.

The notion of "reality testing" also bespeaks the recognition of accurate perception as being one of the characteristics of sanity; yet reality testing has often been used by psychoanalysts with overtones of "adjustment" to a "consensual reality" that, in the view of some thinkers (like Fromm[40] or Szasz[41]), is only shared delusion. The latter view can be most explicitly conveyed by a fable in Gibran's The Madman.[42] It tells of a small kingdom whose only well was visited one night by a witch. She poured seven drops of some strange liquid into it, saying, "From this hour, he who drinks this water shall become mad." The next day all the people, except the king and his chamberlain, drank from the well and became mad. Within a short time, the people started whispering that the king and his chamberlain had gone mad, and so the people plotted to dethrone the king. Hearing this, the king ordered his chamberlain to drink from the well, and he followed suit. The water affected them as it had the rest of the people, who then once again respected and loved the king as before.

We need not see contradiction in the statement that mental disease is delusional and that our standards of normality are, too. Normality is, after all, a statistical concept denoting the most frequent, and few would argue today about the psychopathological quality of the modal personality in our culture. Thus, we may retain the notion that mental health is characterized by the perception of reality, while accepting that the ordinary human condition is somewhere in between the extremes of delusion and perception of the truth. This intermediate condition is not characterized as much by the suffering of the individual, as by the social aberrations that result from his misperceptions. For this reason, Fromm prefers to speak of "socially patterned defect" rather than neurosis.[41] The dogmatic assertion of "the truth" and "reality" by different groups sharing differential notions of it is central to all prejudice, as the authors of The Authoritarian Personality[43] show, or as Eric Hoffer describes in The True Believer.[44]

If we turn again from psychotherapy to mysticism, we find that here "reality" is a major concern. To Evelyn Underhill, "Mysticism is the act of union with reality."[45] Naturally, this point of view also stems from the recognition that our "ordinary reality" is to a large extent a mental construct and not a direct contact with the world.

The stress of mysticism (and esotericism) on reality goes hand in hand with contemplation, self-knowledge, and the development of attention and consciousness. The expression "objective consciousness," used by Gurdjieff[4] instead of the more widespread "cosmic consciousness," also stresses "reality". Here, objectivity is not understood (as in science) as that provided by a conceptual map that is independent of the individual's "subjective" experience, but more in the Sartrean sense of that of an apprehension (or experience) of reality, without the labels that our mind usually places as a film, separating us from our experience.

The opposite of reality, in the terms of mysticism, is the world of illusion, which is that of our ordinary state of consciousness. It is the Maya (illusion) of the Hindus that leads to attachment, "vanity of vanities," the shadow of reality seen by man in Plato's myth of the cave, chained with his back to real objects. That is, enlightenment is a state of knowing and a dissipation of illusion. Thus, a Zen monk could say of his satori: "At a single stroke I have completely crushed the cave of phantoms."

We might be tempted to think of a gradient of grasp on reality, ranging along a line from the delusional extreme of psychosis through the implicit or unconscious delusions of neurosis and our standards of normality, into the area of peak-experience and mystical enlightenment. Considering the matter more closely, though, we might find a circular graph more apt, for there are many ways in which the extremes of psychosis and enlightenment, though opposite, lie close to each other.

The resemblance between genius and madness has been noted from old, and it is the similarity-within-the-difference that led Kris to posit the notion of "regression in the service of the ego." According to this, the creative person would paradoxically be in command of his surrender, being able to relinquish his defense mechanisms at will.

The point of contact between "supernormal" and "subnormal" forms of the abnormal may be provided by the notion of openness to experience, a concept linking our discussion of identity with that of grasp on reality. Studies on openness to experience (such as Barron's on "complexity"[46] and Taft's on ego-permissiveness[47]) suggest that in our "normal state," our range of experience is limited and substituted for by an inferential contact with the world, just as our self-identity is substituted for our conceptual, mnemonic self-image.

It could be said that normality is pseudo-objectivity. While the psychotic acts out his dreams, we relegate our truest affective experience in great measure to the "unconscious" and live in a standardized world of reason; our world-view is in the nature of a system of fairly accurate predictions on our environment. We must realize that this is only a cognitive map, after all, not objective experience. Such a map covers our pathology; a layer of accurate fantasy covers our deeper layer of inaccurate fantasy, which only manifests itself as symptoms, unwarranted moods, dreams. That normality is sometimes compensated or dissimulated psychosis may be shown most convincingly by the artificial suppression of ego-functions with psychopharmacological agents. The creative person, in allowing himself to be open to experience to a larger extent than the average person, opens also up to the pathology that lies ordinarily buried under a role of "adaptation." He is therefore more anxious than the "normal" person,[46] albeit more fulfilled, and capable of enjoying moments of great meaningfulness. The normal situation, then, is like a delusion of nondelusion, one in which most distorted experience is not taken into account in the dealings with reality. Such dealings, therefore, do not stem from the total personality, but from the mask-like censor with which the person identifies, as discussed previously.

To say that normality is only the masking of psychotic experience is probably an overstatement. However, such a state of compensation is only possible whenever there is no great dissonance between conscious ego-perception of reality and unconscious experience. Whenever the discrepancy is too large (much reality distortion being present in the experiential side), this cannot be bypassed anymore, and it leads to symptoms. The "normal" person may be thus at the same time more removed from experience than the super or subnormal in the psychopathological scale, yet between both extremes in terms of distortion of experience.

The notion that the average condition of humanity is that of a bad model or reality covered up by a right model has significant implications for our understanding of the ways of growth. Our essential disunity is that of two levels of interpretation of the world (rational versus irrational, adult versus child, conscious versus unconscious, and so forth), and our experience cannot change unless we allow ourselves to experience it. For healing to take place, the wound must be exposed. For purification to occur, sin. For growth; immaturity, for totality; nothingness. The way is typically that of descent into hell, or falling in order to rise. Or, as the French say it, "reculer pour mieux sauter." All this entails a willingness to accept the discomfort resulting from the giving up of temporary adaptation in the "as if" modality of functioning. It is a process of positive disintegration, as Dalonski[48] puts it; a gradual letting-go of perception and impulse censorships of the ego that may even lead through psychotic manifestations.

The risk of psychosis has been recognized in mystical and esoteric ways and was particularly stressed by Jung as an accident, in what he called the process of "individuation." More recently, Maslow has spoken of the dangers of "B-cognition." Psychotic manifestations are also not infrequent in the terminal stages of successful psychoanalysis. But only recently have we begun to see an explicit recognition of the value of psychotic experience and perhaps the need for it as a stage in the process of deep unification and self-realization. Laing has presented this view most articulately[32] while Silverman[49] posits that the initiatory process that in Shamanism leads to the fulfillment of an extraordinary personality is essentially that of a psychosis allowed to take its self-healing course.

We may wonder whether the cataclysmic "positive disintegration" of a Shaman, a saint, or an enlightened Remakrishna may be nothing but a stylistic alternative to the chronic activity of a great artist, who can tolerate his looking into darkness and bring new treasures out of it every day. Dante's attainment in Paradise, suggests this to be so: "For now my sight, clear and yet clearer grown, pierced through the ray of that exalted light. Wherein, as in itself, the truth is known." And later: "as from a dream one may awake to find his passion yet imprinted on the heart, although all else is cancelled from the mind."

If we look at the ways of growth as ways toward fuller contact with reality, we at once see that all the important methods may be seen as paths to experiencing, without which "reality" can only be a concept or a fantasy. Psychoanalysts are aware that intellectual insight cannot substitute for "emotional insight." Gestalt therapists, still more aware of the screening function of conceptual thinking, substitute free association thinking for the exercise of "staying in the continuum of awareness," a concept much like that of sustained attention in meditation disciplines. In both meditation and Gestalt therapy, there is a place for the resource of suppressing thinking and imagining in favor of sensing and feeling, which are generally overshadowed by the former. Aside from this, most meditation approaches stress the suppression of movement, so that attention and psychological activity in general is further channeled into the domain of pure receptivity.

If objects are employed, attention is focused and not dispersed, so that it may reach beyond the ordinary schematic understanding. But sensory stimulation that directs more specifically the person's consciousness to his inner events may be also withheld. We now know that extreme sensory deprivation can uncover or bring out the background of the person's feeling or one imaginative experience. I am not certain whether the potential of this procedure in the context of psychotherapy has been explored, but it seems like a hardy alternative to what the early church fathers underwent in their longer, though less drastic periods of sensory deprivation in the desert.

Various components or ingredients maybe discerned in the strategies aimed at the enhancement of experience, each of which is found in more than one of the more structured systems. I would suggest understanding one as the suppression of the filtering mechanisms by means of which our conscious mind perceives. As Huxley points out, our perceptions are more like grey illustrations of concepts than a reception of the colors and shapes of the world--to say nothing of its smells and textures.[50] We seem to take in as much of the world as we need, to diagnose what is out there, which is all that our coping-oriented egos need. Nevertheless, the total personality thirsts for more and is left unsatisfied. To our greater self, sense impressions are the real food, not their conceptual lables. According to Ehrenzweig, in Psychoanalysis or Artistic Vision and Hearing,[51] art gives us such food and manages to do so by means of an implicit strategy that defeats our censorship. It keeps our conceptual mind busy with its own structure and regularity, while it speaks to our direct experiencing from its irregularity. It distracts our ego with its form, while it reaches our unconscious with its formlessness.

Another approach of bypassing our ordinary conceptual filtering (aside from deliberate suppression of thinking as part of some practices) is the use of the tachystoscope, introduced into the formation of artists by Hoyt Sherman.[52] If only given a fraction of a second to see the model, a painter is not able to do a skilled but mechanical task of copying it, part after part. He has to see the totality at once, and understand it before thinking about it. Studies quoted by Renshaw[53] claim that children exposed to the task of seeing and drawing patterns projected with a tachystoscope improved at school and seemed to become more attentive. I have not seen other studies along these lines, but it is conceivable that this may constitute a valuable form of training in an attitude of openness toward the visual world, if not toward sensory reality in general.

The psychedelic experience, too, can be seen from the angle of an artificial suspension of filtering mechanisms, as Huxley describes it in The Doors of Perception:[54]

> The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful.
>
> According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. But in so far as we are animals, our business is at all costs to survive. To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funneled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out at the other end is a measly trickle of the kind of consciousness that will help us to stay alive on the surface of this particular planet. To formulate and express the contents of this reduced awareness, man has invented and endlessly elaborated those symbol-systems and implicit philosophies that we call languages. Every individual is at once the beneficiary and the victim of the linguistic tradition into which he has been born--the beneficiary inasmuch as language gives access to the accumulated records of other people's experience, the victim in so far as it confirms him in the belief that reduced awareness is the only awareness and as it bedevils his sense of reality, so that he is all too apt to take his concepts for data, his words for actual things. That which, in the language of religion, is called this world is the universe of reduced awareness, expressed, and, as it were, petrified by language. The various "other worlds" with which

> human beings erratically make contact are so many elements in the totality of the awareness belonging to Mind at Large. Moreover, most people, most of the time, know only what comes through the reducing valve and is consecrated as genuinely real by the local language. Certain persons, however, seem to be born with a kind of by-pass that circumvents the reducing valve. In others, temporary by-passes may be acquired either spontaneously, or as the result of deliberate 'spiritual exercises,' or through hypnosis, or by means of drugs. Through these permanent or temporary by-passes there flows, not indeed the perception of everything that is happening everywhere in the universe (for the by-pass does not abolish the reducing valve, which still excludes the total content of Mind at Large), but something more than, and above all something different from the carefully selected utilitarian material which our narrowed individual minds regard as a complete, or at least sufficient, picture of reality.

Another strategy leading toward the contacting of experience, used mostly in psychotherapy, is that of simply pointing out to the person his own processes. The forms may vary. In analytical interpretations, the reality that is indicated may be unverifiable (experience must be that), so that the analyst arrives at it by intuition: "I think that you are regretting what you said," "I think you are afraid," and so forth, but there is no clear limit between intuition or inference, on the one hand, and the obvious facts. The Rogerian approach is more that of not going beyond the obvious, merely reflecting. Such reflecting, experience shows, is not redundant; just like the reflection from a mirror, it adds substance to the person's experience of himself. In Gestalt therapy, emphasis is given to the indication of the patient's automatic or involuntary behavior, not for the purpose of "interpretation" but of staying in touch with the totality of experience and "coming to the senses."

A third way of bringing experience into focus is that of identifying with or enacting certain emotions. The process of identifying with an object or character is implicit in the understanding of art (Lipps' and Worringer's empathy, Polanyi's indwelling). In certain forms of meditation, it is the deliberate goal. Identification may be looked at from the more obvious point of view of constituting a temporary end in the subject-object dichotomy of discursive thinking (as distinct from intuitive thinking). But this is also a quality of experiencing, as distinct from thinking. Aesthetic emotions are not the sole source of gratuitous enjoyment of the object in itself and for itself. In love and in the feeling of sacredness, we also project ourselves into the being of the other and contact our own reality in the process.

Deepening our contact with reality entails more than a shift from conceptualizing to experiencing. Once the veil of reason and pseudo-reality is removed, there is still the path from illusion to reality, from our implicit assumptions and distorted images of reality and true contact. Behind the ego-screening, there are deeper screens, based on less conscious but greater fears. According to Zen:[55]

> At the beginning of the journey the trees look like trees, the mountain like a mountain and the lake like a lake. In the middle of the journey the trees don't look like trees anymore, nor the mountain seems to be a mountain, and the lake is no longer like a lake; but at the end of the journey the mountain is a mountain, the lake a lake, trees, trees."

Thus, there are two approaches to the transformation of delusion into reality; both compatible and present. One is that of letting the delusional system "wear itself out" spontaneously, as it is exposed to conscious scrutiny. Just as we may seize a dropping object as soon as we realize that it is falling, we naturally correct many of our views of people or of ourselves as soon as we make them explicit enough to ourselves, often in the process of expressing them to somebody else.

This goes beyond verbal or conceptual notions and is a requisite part of a healthy life. We outgrow ourselves through reflective awareness and choice. The notion that self-expression itself can be constructive, even when it only expresses the soul's "garbage" would be supported by most, but I think it finds its fullest expression in three domains: (1) Laing's "blow-out" approach to schizophrenia, where the process is respected as the person's deepest need and therapeutic move, and life to its natural course;[56] (2) the guided daydreams, a process in the evolution of which it may be seen that childish and unrealistic fantasies move naturally in the direction of archetypal contents and a concern with the central issues of existence; and (3) Subud's "latihan," in which it is expected that expression "from within" will be self-perfecting, and nothing else is required but giving in to the preference of every moment.[57] In all these and many more processes, the individual's experience is displayed to him so that he may take it or leave it in an act of implicit evaluation. Thus, whatever is invalid in the person's experience as related to him melts in the fire of consciousness.

Another way to experience reality, in contrast to that of attending to and expressing the area of "delusion" (symptoms, feelings, fantasies or the stream of consciousness with its diverse ingredients) is that of moving into reality, squeezing it, as it were, for more and more. This is the way of understanding when rightly understood (as distinct from conceptual learning). Every drop of true understanding--which is experiential knowledge--opens up a way into our reality, where we may find further understanding. Thus, the way of the humanities, when put to their real purpose of showing man to man, the way of religious symbolism, and the way of art. A symbol, artistic or religious, is intended to recreate in the perceiver the experience that gave it birth, but paradoxically, it cannot be understood by other than he who has the experience already. What the symbol does, then, is to bring certain experiences into focus--experiences that are at the core of our being human and are inseparable from our reality. A symbol only arouses what is close to the surface of our consciousness, and so we must find what is meaningful to us in our uniquely individual condition at the moment. As we move toward greater understanding and deeper experience, our appreciation of the symbolic world changes, and we need different books, different music, different forms to take us to the next step.

Among the symbolic means that convey the attributes of reality, ritual holds a prominent place. In a way, all art is ritual, in the sense that we must identify with it to experience any of it (us) at all. But ritual is the deliberate acting out of symbolic forms, stressing the process of identification. Naturally, it is possible to undergo a ritual in a mechanical way (i.e., without the inner identification or empathy), and this is so often the case that "ritualistic" has come to mean an event that is lifeless, without emotion or inner participation. Yet the essence of ritual is in the combination of integrative symbols (archetypes, Jung would say), with the technique of identifying with them; in lending them our lives, we may discover what our lives are like.

Increase in Detachment and Responsibility

In speaking of detachment, I will essentially be referring to an experience and not to a moral trait, even though such a subjective quality will probably originate a definite quality of behavior. The experience that I will be dealing with, in the framework of this phenomenological study, is that in which the individual confronts the world or his own processes with the attitude, "this is not me." In other words, it is an experience of disidentification from perceptible phenomena. "Responsibility," in this context, should also be taken in the psychological sense and not in those of metaphysics or ethics. We say that we are taking responsibility for our thoughts, feelings, or actions when we see ourselves related to them as their agent; when we stand behind them, so to speak, as their doer. Absolute detachment would involve the experience of one's self as independent from the world, whereas complete responsibility would entail that of perceiving one's self as identical to a portion of the world, and inseparable from the world as a whole. Instead of responsibility, we could also speak of "merging" or of identification, in contrast to disidentification (for "attachment" conveys separateness, just as detachment does). From the discussion below, it will be seen that this polarity also corresponds to one of expressing selfhood and "selflessness." Moreover, it will be clear that the alternative of detachment vs. merging in or confluence with the world is the same as that of experiencing our actions as our doing. It is also the same as experiencing ourselves as "spirit" or "body."

On the surface, body and mind may seem to be quite different entities, yet in terms of experience, being one's body, being the doer of one's actions, wanting and perceiving one's self as substantially existing, constitute aspects of a single state, as opposed to one of having a body rather than being it, being the witness of natural processes rather than their doer, feeling detached from all wants, and even more, empty of any substantial being.

None of these states is that of average humanity, and, in fact, their description may generally appear as a matter of theoretical speculation rather than anything that can be experienced. We usually do not experience ourselves as being our body, but rather as living in it or having one. Our "true being"--regardless of our possible materialistic outlook in theory--feels more like that of a mind, a consciousness or soul within the body. Nor do we experience ourselves as doers of all our actions. Many things "happen" to us; we are not ultimate masters. We may do what we want; but we cannot want what we want. The very word passion--denoting the root of our actions--denotes passivity. Our impulses lead us; we do not feel that they stem from us. In much of our lives we are aware of the wants in us that we do not want. Our self and our urges are dissociated, just as self and body are. Who is it in us that says "I" and is not the body, or the passions, or what we do? Whoever pursues this meditation discovers that this "I" lacks substantial existence.

Nevertheless, we do not experience ourselves at the other end of the range, either. If we fully experienced ourselves as not-the-body we would see our existence as independent of our body and as not vulnerable to any physical threat--including death. If we experienced everything as happening to us or through us, instead of it being our doing and choice, we would be able to surrender to the unavoidable stream of happening and cease the deluded striving to alter it. If we felt completely detached from the stream of events in us and around us, we would hold no preference for this or that, and we would allow it to be as it is.

The experience of being nonexistent may be hard even to imagine or conceive, so remote does such condition seem from our ordinary state of consciousness. When we look at the recipes for better living--mystical, secular, old, or new, we cannot dispense with these issues. While implicit in some of the ways of growth they are very explicit in others. The "I-am-the-body" approach is either in the minds or overt statements of many of those who are contributing at present to the rediscovery of our physical being. It is not merely a contemporary trend or a Western one, for it is as old as the Vedas and has found significant expression with the rise of tantric Buddhism in India and Tibet. The most consistent formulation and use of this assumption in the current approaches is to be found in Gestalt Therapy, and an examination of it in that context can reveal more of its implications.

For the Gestalt therapist, all that happens in us, we do; but this we do not acknowledge or experience as such, for we disidentify ourselves from our processes. We create a fictitious barrier between the "I" and the "it," calling nonego everything for which we do not want to take responsibility. The goal of therapy, from one point of view, is that of realizing that we are where we want to be, that we are doing what we want to do, that we are going in the direction of our preference, which we enjoy.

The practical consequences of this point of view bear on each domain of psychological functioning. First, the patient is urged to change his way of speaking about himself in the direction of "I-language." This entails such things as saying "I think" rather than "the thought occurs to me," "I let my mind wander" rather than "my mind wanders" and so on. The patient also is encouraged to avoid denoting impersonality, and to use the substitute of "I" or "you" wherever possible. The mere shift in language entails a shift in point of view and, like a ritual, brings along an experiential "as if." Such practice invites the person to experience himself as if he were the responsible doer of his actions and the locus of his perceptions, so that he may have a chance of discovering that this is, indeed, true (i.e., an experiential fact).

The same "as if" approach is brought to bear directly on the issue of being one's body in the practice of becoming the body, its parts, or actions, by giving it words or effecting an imaginary shift in identity. A patient may be instructed to "play" his voice, for instance, or his left hand or his smile. This may eventually lead him to discover his own feelings-and-doing in all of what seemed to him previously as "automatic," meaningless, and feelingless. What the body felt, knew and wanted, he now feels, knows, and wants. The ego has extended his frontiers, but only in his reowning the disavowed and realizing that, to begin with, such a frontier was a myth.

What are the limits of this approach? If I am my body, feelings, thoughts, wishes; if I am whatever I may call my processes, where are my limits? For my processes are certainly not limited by my skin The events "within" me are the fragments in casual chains that originate beyond me and do not end in me. Moreover, there is only a universal stream of casuality, and aside for arbitrariness or for practical purposes, I call "me" the region of my body. When I say "don't touch me," I include my clothes.

Yet, though "I" digest my food and renew my skin, I, personally, am not aware of doing so. Though awareness may expand, and a person may extend the boundaries of his "I" to include more of himself and more of the world, there is a habitual boundary that few claim to trespass. Again, this is the boundary between the therapeutic endeavor and the mystical. The psychotherapist speaks of becoming conscious but would not think of (or be interested in) becoming conscious of the vegetative or cellular processes, while the mystic claims to grow his "I-amness" to the size of the world.

"Tat Twam Asi," say the Upanishads: thou are that; everything in the world is of the same substance as you; moreover, it is you. According to the Koran, "Wherever you turn your face, there is God," referring again to the oneness of everything. The individual is only a facet of that oneness--or else a nothingness, an illusion.

Let us now examine the alternative approach: that of disidentification with the body and phenomena. It may be found in modern approaches, as in psychosynthesis,[58] but is at least as old as Patanjali's yoga. For Patanjali,[59] the self is enmeshed in the psychic structure but is different from it. That is, "I" am not only not my body, but I am not my feelings nor my thoughts. All these occur in me, and I mistakenly identify myself with them. Believing I am them, I become attached to them, and thus fear harm or loss. But nothing could really harm "me" or even touch me or affect me, for I am beyond the mechanicalness of physical and mental processes.

The Hindu formula for the discovery of the self is Neti-Neti: Not this, not this. For self cannot possibly be described in positive terms--though it is the heart of everything. Whatever may be pointed at, it is not. The relevant psychological exercise stemming from this approach is the perfect opposite of the identification or enactment procedure in Gestalt therapy. It is an approach of sensing the body, while feeling that, "This is my body, not me." Furthermore, it is one of contemplating the emotions and feelings in the attitude of, "These feelings occur in me, but are not myself, I can exist without them," and regarding thoughts in the same way, "Here is a thought that I have: it is not me."

Another expression of the Neti-Neti approach can be found in the practice of a school deriving from Gurdjieff's group.. The practical side of this system is not explicitly described in any book, but the interested reader may find the main ideas put forward in Ouspenski's _In Search of the Miraculous_[60] and De Ropp's _The Master Game_.[61] In Buddhism, as in most of psychotherapy, the emphasis is on watchfulness over physical, emotional, and mental processes, and, particularly, sustained watchfulness throughout the day. An observer must develop, who can say to every complex or subself, "There you are: you are not "I," you are just a part claiming to be the whole." In practice, the seeker finds out that he cannot be present always as an observer; there are gaps in his awareness. And as he tries further, he may discover that he has been avoiding the acknowledgment of aspects of his being that are expressed by certain actions, fantasies, or thoughts. Being present as an observer implies contacting these events, realizing not only that they are not him, but that they are part of him, in him.

Like other approaches stressing "detached" observation, the Gurdjieffian bears the mark of an ascetic tendency. This stems from the expectation that opposing the spontaneous processes may be an occasion for knowing them better.

This suggests that the process of asceticism, which seems to be one of moving away from sensory experience, is one of facilitating real contact with the body and its artificially enhanced needs. The most typical way of rising above the senses and emotions is in reality inseparable from the descent into direct contact with the immediacy of feeling.

If we carry the thought of separateness (and, we are told, the experience) to its ultimate consequences, we will see the domain of the self shrinking more and more as we deprive it of all we regarded as part of it, until it vanishes into nothing. And this again brings us into the domain of mystical experience and its formulations.

The experience of self as ultimately nothing has been expressed most explicitly in Buddhism, which holds this realization as the heart of enlightenment. Nirvana is extinction not only of desire but of self. The doctrine of no-self (Anatta) probably found its most systematic exponent in the Indian philosopher Nagarjuna (about 113-213 A.D.) and is a salient feature of the Mahayaha school of Buddhism. The central voidness of our nature is depicted in Tibet as a diamond, for it is at once most transparent, bright and hard, enduring. The Chinese Zen patriarch Hui Neng, emphasizing the quality of emptiness, compares mind to space: "The capacity of the mind is as great as that of space. It is infinite, neither round nor square, neither great nor small, neither green nor yellow, neither red nor white, neither above nor below, neither long nor short, neither angry nor happy, neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, neither first nor last."

The experience of self-nothingness filled by the world (or by God) is not specific to Buddhism. Christianity abounds with utterances from the mystics that express the same view, and in Islam we find that the term for enlightenment is practically a translation of Nirvana: Fana: extinction. The theme of emptiness pervades Lao Tze's Tao Te Ching: "Tao is empty like a bowl. Infinite and soundless, it cannot be given any name; it reverts to nothingness."

As being-the-body implies being desires, being no-thing implies not being or having desires: they are part of the body, part of the universal stream of events, not "me." Therefore, the injunction of the Bhagavad Gita: Be the same in pleasure and in pain. And as being-in-the-body entails being the doer of actions, the extinction of apparent existence amounts to a nondoing, a transparence, or a letting go to what is God's will. Yet this state is not depicted as one of indifference, but on the contrary, a desireless and gratuitous bliss. It is a saying "yes" to the inevitability of happenings; a relinquishing of preference, and an equal love for everything.

Though logically opposite, the ideas of self as everything or nothing may be only alternative translations of a single experience into the media of concepts and words. Many formulations, indeed, insist that the reality that is talked about transcends both predicaments. Also, whether the "I" is experienced as all or nothing, one consequence is the same: the distinction between self and other disappears. In both cases, all that exists is one.

I have already mentioned James Jeans' reflection upon the irreconciliable models of light as wave or particle, both of which explain certain phenomena, suggesting that this may be the result of trying to represent in our minds a reality of more dimensions than what we can grasp. In many of our conceptual models, we are paying the price for translating something into a lower dimensional medium. And so, with experience too, we may have to distort it in some way in the process of translating its ineffability into the logical medium through which we communicate. Consequently, speaking of the experience of the most desirable state, we may have to accept its rendering through paradoxes. The paradox is the ultimate that reason can comprehend. Standing with one foot on each term of the paradox, we may be able to get our head beyond it. So I am suggesting that, along with the conceptual duality of being all or nothing, we can conceive an experiential monism in terms of which the antithetical conceptions lead in their application. Mahayana Buddhism states it; Nirvana equals Samsara.

Increased Unity

Increased unity is expected from the therapeutic process, both at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. The former entails the resolution of inner conflicts and leads to the integration of personality. The latter leads to the capacity of loving and a sense of unity with our fellow beings through removal of projections, vulnerability, and fear resulting from misperception of our own reality or theirs. Beyond this level of personal integration, the mystical traditions speak of a unification between body and mind, subject and object, man and God.

We need not regard these as different forms of unity, but rather as different expressions of a single unification process. If, for instance, we were to achieve the state of ego-loss in which we see everything flowing according to its own law, how could we experience inner conflict? Conversely, the resolution of inner conflicts may be a precondition for attainment of union with other aspects of reality.

Unity of the usual mind-body dichotomy is achieved in the measure that an experiential path is followed that leads to the finding of only one or the other of these two as existing; an intelligent body of spiritualized matter, or a God not only incarnate in all things but giving all things their very substance. A unity of subject and object, or Man and World was also implied. There is a state, which seems to be the limit of what we regard as human development, where this boundary is lost without loss of self-awareness. Some of this condition is part of intuitive thinking and aesthetic states, but more obviously it is an aspect of so-called "cosmic consciousness."[62]

Finally, the distinction of Man and God is also reabsorbed into unity, whether this is expressed in theistic language ("I am one with God, part of God, or God") or atheistic. In the latter case, the feelings that are usually "projected" in a God image or concept are reincorporated in the world and in man. In this way, Man is God; the experience of self becomes endowed with the quality of sanctity, profoundness, ineffability, and especially with that of being an end in itself.

As with the extremes of experience depicted earlier in this work, the extremes of unity of which the mystics speak may seem so remote from ordinary experience that they might be thought to be no more than matters of fantasy or philosophical speculation. Yet the experience of unity between subject and object underlies all true aesthetic experiences (as distinct from judgment of "good taste") to the extent of their depth; similarly, the experience of unity with another human being underlies the feelings of true love (as distinct from much that we call that). An exegesis of "love thy neighbor as thyself" has it that this is only possible when the third (or first) term of the equation is taken into account: "and God above all things." For, speaking in theistic language, God is the only one that may be loved, and in terms of whom we may love ourselves or others. If we prefer a non-theistic expression and speak of love of existence, or of self beyond differentiation, still such love bespeaks a quality of unconditionality (to the extent of its intensity) that is true to experience. Also, it is as if the lover were resting on an implicit emotional assumption of "I am you" or "I and you are of the same nature."

It seems to be established beyond doubt that true love for self or other are interdependent. Both presuppose the ability to love being for itself, or substance beyond quality. And the first manifestation of this capacity must be the acceptance of what is nearest: one's own functions.

Yet expressions such as "the integration of personality" (Jung) or "the harmonious development of man" (Gurdjieff) stem from the recognition that the ordinary state of man, and to a much greater extent the pathological, are marked by conflict, splits, dissociation, and contradiction between psychological functions or personality fragments. Indeed, it was a momentous contribution of Freud to point out that every symptom was the expression of a conflict. Yet most internal conflicts are themselves no more than the particularized manifestation of more generalized conflicts among basic urges or subselves. While these exist, there can hardly be a single moment or action not endowed with some conflictive quality, even though it may be subliminal and unrecognized. Freud viewed these as conflicts between superego, ego, and id--the internalized norms of civilization, demands of reality, and innate urges.

Jung stresses the conflict among the different functions of the ego--thinking, feeling, sensing, intuition--and those between the introversive and extraversive tendencies. Horney speaks of a central conflict that is the basis for all others: that between the real self and the idealized self or false personality.

These are all different approaches to the same issues. Whatever the terminology and point of view, it is reconciliation and collaboration between these major aspects of psychological life that is sought. And whether in terms of the "conciliation of opposites" in Jung's terms, "the transcendence of opposites," in psychosynthesis, Buddha's "middle path," or Confucius' "Golden mean," each is an approach to the wholeness of the human being.

It would be hard to find a single procedure among the ways of growth that could not be viewed from the standpoint of conflict resolution. The first step towards such resolution in many cases must be the exposure of conflicts that hitherto may have seemed unconscious, and this may take place in any of the insight systems ranging from the Christian practice of examination of conscience to the modern therapies.

Some approaches to conflict resolution could be viewed as an attempt to transcend the conflict by disidentification with one or both alternatives. In this light, we may view exercising the voluntary cessation of some psychological phenomena that is part of some forms of meditation. Such "emptying the mind" of thoughts or feelings entails a flexibility to allow the unexpected to enter it, for this emptiness is in the nature of a state of having no preconceptions. In conflict, in contrast, a given feeling, thought, or desire is standing in the way of another. The approach of relaxation at all levels, physical, emotional, intellectual, amounts to that of developing a certain amount of detachment that may allow for flexibility in the interplay of psychological forces.

Gurdjieff emphasizes that the automatic nature of our movements, feelings, thoughts, their unconsciousness and their dissociation, are aspects of the same thing. We are aware only when the different domains of functioning meet, as when both our movements and thinking converge on a task, or when our feelings and thoughts meet. We are totally aware only that these three (moving, feeling, thinking) are synchronic. The relevant practice, therefore, is to engage in the effort of bringing the totality of our being--action, feeling, thinking--to a given task, whether it is an ordinary action or a specially designed exercise.

The hesychast prayer, a spiritual exercise of the fathers in Mt. Athos, may be viewed from the same perspective. The praying is done from the heart, both physically and in the sense of blending its ideational content with the feelings, and the process is a rhythmical one that follows the respiratory movements. All three domains of movement, feeling, and thinking are made to converge in a single act where the totality of the person's available attention is centered.

Wherever structured movements, rituals, prayers, or mantras are employed, these may be viewed as integrative symbols, in the sense that they are expected to operate from the ideational or motoric on the feelings. Certain feelings will be evoked by their symbolic quality that will then be synchronic to the person's ongoing physical or mental activity, and a moment of congruence thus achieved will facilitate further unification. Gurdjieff, speaking of such integration between body, feelings, and the intellectual function, compares them to a coach with its horse and driver and points out that what is needed is a development of "reins" that go between driver and horse, and of "shafts" between the horse and the coach.[4]

The alternative strategy to unification is that of merging with each side in the conflict in turn and knowing it by indwelling, in the act of expression or introspection. Most conflicts stem from a judgmental act of the ego, by which the personal reality is divided into goodness and badness according to some set of internalized norms (which, in pathological conditions can take the form of a compulsive system rather than a notion of the desirable). Therefore, the process of exploration may proceed into the "should" system of Horney,[28] super ego or "top dog,"[63] or, alternatively, into the Pandora's box containing all the rejected aspects of psychic life, the suppression of which is creating imbalance and the conflicting presence of which is manifested half-consciously or unconsciously in symptoms. This is the domain of Jung's shadow and constitutes most of what is expressed in therapeutic "catharsis" or "abreaction."

The elements of "looking-into" and "letting-out" (self insight and self expression) are major ingredients of most, if not all, of the ways of growth, and they can be looked at in terms of the building of a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious, as much as between the feeling-instinctual and the rational. The combined process of expression-insight is at the same time one of knowledge, liberation, and self-valuation. Experience tells us that there is a turning point where something in our inner lives, once truly known or contacted, is found to be acceptable and expressible.

Thus, the incorporation of personality fragments into the organic unity and the "bridging" process leading to such unity cannot be separated from the movement in the direction of greater freedom and self-acceptance that I discuss below.

All that is called depth psychotherapy constitutes a balancing of personality by bringing the unconscious, postponed, undeveloped, and avoided into focus and into operation. The same, of course, may be said of all expressive acts: art, true friendship, the spontaneous inventive story-telling of some parents to their children, encounter groups, and the radical "letting go" involved in the Subud latihan or in psychedelic experiences.

One particular technique that deserves to be mentioned in this connection is that of hypnosis, it being a great potential in the exploration of the unconscious. Also, it suggests a strategy of wider applicability. In the hypnotic situation, a person may dare to open up to feelings, memories, or thoughts that he would not recognize, experience, or express because, in a way, he is not there as a witness. The process may be pictured as one in which all that he fears he can allow, because "he" is not exposed to it. Everything happens behind his back and outside of his responsibility. "He" is asleep, and when he awakens, he will feel free to forget it again. Yet one of the values of the approach lies in the fact that when his delegated self remembers, feels, utters the avoided and unforgivable, it (or he) finds out that there is nothing so unbearable in it, after all. The whole event may be conceived as an "as if" situation, a role of assumed unconsciousness being played, that "tricks" the unconscious mind into manifestation and provides the opportunity for new learning. As in other approaches, the person learns that there was nothing to fear but his preconceptions and fantasies.

The same strategy need not be restricted to the use of hypnosis. To some extent, it is the point in behavior therapy at which the patient meets the avoided under optimum conditions of reassurance, and especially in psychodrama, guided reveries, or any expressive acts in a symbolic medium. In all these experiences, the person is allowing himself to express aspects of himself that would not emerge so easily if it were not for the "make believe" quality of such expressions. For the symbol not only embodies but substitutes: the person can always experience it as "not really me." If this is true of much art and dream experience, it is twice as true of the spectator: his cathartic experience is made possible by symbolic participation in what he would not risk to live. Thus, art plays a role, while at the same time reminding man of his deepest feelings and substituting vicarious experience for direct expression. If symbolic expression and participation are a bridge to (or from) the unconscious, they are usually half or one-third of a bridge that calls for an extra step of explicitation of experience or desymbolization. There can be no question as to the potential of art here, if followed by proper meditation or reflection.

What is said of art may also be said of dreams; a form of symbolic expression that we all share and that constitutes perhaps our most spontaneous activity. Dream symbolism, as any other, expresses us better than concepts can,but it stands as an entity separated from us, a not-I. It is a message from our depths, but only when we understand its language and recognize it as our own expression. Psychotherapy has paid a great deal of attention to dreams, whether in terms of "interpretation" (psychoanalysis) underlying the archetypal qualities (Jungian analysis) or unfolding their contents through enacting (psychodrama, Gestalt therapy). Yet aside from the therapy context, there is a sharp split between our dream life and our conscious concern for it (a characteristic of our culture). This is not the case in the so-called primitive cultures, especially in those where shamanism is more alive. Among these, a pervasive interest in dreams goes hand in hand with a collaborative relationship between ego and nonego--whether body, tribesman, or nature.

A particular approach to dream life that deserves mention among the ways of growth is the systematic handling of these productions among the Senoi, a rather isolated culture in Malaya.[64] It is an established custom among these people that at the beginning of the day the father, to some extent a dream expert, discusses the family's night dreams. Not only are the dreams told and listened to, but they are evaluated, and the father gives advice to the children. For example, a child may have dreamed that he was falling, and the father may comment; "There must have been a purpose in your fall. The spirit of the depth must have been pulling you down. What did you see under you?" If the child did not see anything in his nightmarish panic, he may be given the advice that next time to look where he is going and discover the purpose of the fall. Subsequently, the child may have a dream in which he starts to fall, but remembering the advice, he stops resisting it, and this falling becomes flight. When his father hears this report, he may still feel that his son's dream is unfinished, for he has not found anything or met anyone. The father's further directions will modify subsequent dreaming until the child learns something from the dream. Thus, only when the dreamer has found in his dream something that he may bring back to the community--a new song, a dance, an invention, an idea--is a dream considered complete among the Senoi.

I have touched only on a single aspect of the Senoi's handling of dream material, but this may suffice to point out the possibility of what amounts to the cultivation of dream life and at the same time the establishment of a link between the activities of the dreaming and the wakeful mind. The subject is led into an attitude of taking responsibility and feeling himself to be a doer of his dreams, as he is of his conscious actions; thus he learns how to master his dreams, without detracting from their spontaneity and revelation-quality. On the contrary, he learns how to live them out to the fullest, just as an artist learns to develop a theme to its fullest potential. Since dreaming is a symbolic display of a person's feeling-life, the practice of the Senoi is a good example of a salutary cultural means of developing unity among feeling, thinking, and doing.

Increase in Freedom and the Ability to Surrender

If we take "freedom" to denote "freedom from," that is, lack of obstructions, this has always been a major concern of psychiatry. For most, such freedom in the task of letting the mind go its own course is marred by "defenses" and "resistance." These are but the reflection of the neurotic component in the average personality, which marks a person's actions with compulsiveness, though this may be such an implicit compulsiveness that it becomes ego-syntonic. We obey hidden masters, believing ourselves to be free. The issue of a loss of freedom in connection with psychopathology becomes clear-cut, even a matter of legal distinction, when we consider the psychotic extreme. In common parlance, a sick person is not held "responsible."

More generally, "freedom" distinguishes voluntary acts from the involuntary or automatic and is therefore an aspect of consciousness. Consequently, everything that seeks to expand the range of conscious life (in-depth psychology), may be seen as an agent in the growth of freedom.

If we want to include in our concepts of freedom the "freedom for" aspect (a notion of our goals), then we become aware of the states that Fromm describes as a "fear of freedom." Specifically, it is the state of the reluctance to choose to give up slavery to external or internalized authority and to carry out the symbolical meaning of Christ's statement that "the father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law" (Luke 13, 53).

In mystical and religious literature, the allusions to freedom are even more clear-cut. In the Christian concept, free will is man's predicament, to the extent that he shares the Divine nature. In the writings of St. Paul, freedom is equated with freedom from sin; its attainment being equivalent to living the life of Jesus Christ. In the Hindu tradition, too, the state that is the end of the spiritual quest is seen as one of liberation. One who has attained it is a Jivan Mukti--one who has been liberated while in life.

If we turn to the positive aspect in freedom--that of "freedom for" something, once the obstacles are removed--what are we left with? Not chaos or random behavior, but quite the opposite: the person's essential stream of choices or preferences, which is his being true to himself, being his most coherent and articulate self, and bearing the mark of his unique individual style. In this sense, our freedom is that of being what we are--a giving in to the necessity of our being. The Christian's freedom to live his "Christ nature" is equivalent to that of utmost obedience to "God's will." In Mohammedanism, the free man is one who becomes a "slave of God"; Alan Watts comments on this paradox in his introduction to Spiegel's "Spiritual disciplines in India":[65]

> For example, we are used to thinking that some events are the results of our own intentions, and others just happen to us. But is this really so? From another, equally valid, point of view my own intentions and desires are entirely determined by what happens to me-by my circumstances, my birth, my upbringing, my unconscious drives, and a hundred other factors over which I have no control. It seems, then that my own intentions "happen to me" just as much as anything else--from measles to an earthquake.

Leaving aside all speculation about determinism-indeterminism, we can safely assume that the experience characteristic of the higher states in the ladder of human inner attainment may be described just as well as one of freedom or surrender. God's law, Dharma, the path, Tao, the way, all point to a precise course of action for man to follow whenever he is "free" for it. ("The spirit is freedom," said Hegel, but he conceived freedom as the acceptance of necessity.)

An experience that is related to that of freedom is that of ease, or its counterpart, difficulty or work. "Letting go" to our essential nature, surrendering to the stream of our experience, might be thought of as the position of least effort. In fact, such experience of being carried or being one with the flow of life events is often depicted in the east as one of Wu-Wei, nondoing. On the other hand, spontaneity bears the contradiction of the whole of our conditioned personality--a going against the grain of inner obstacles. And in that sense it is hard work.

What is the greatest ease, from the point of view of the essence, is the greatest negation to the ego-centered personality. Literally, it means the sacrifice and surrender of the ego. And what may be seen as a simultaneous process of "letting go" and "working against," from the contrasting points of view of the self and the programmed robot in us, may also be seen, in the course of personal growth, as the one being followed by the other. What to the beginner is effort, austerity, and self-discipline is at a more advanced state pursued for its intrinsic reward. Thus, the truth can be expressed at the beginning of psychotherapy only by an effort to overcome feelings of shame and guilt; by going against the stream of ordinary propensities, and by resisting. Yet a healthy person feels that it would be an effort to be roundabout, and truth "makes him free." Real communication, which may only be achieved by resisting fear of rejection, becomes natural, and work in general takes on more the nature of play.

The issue of freedom (or surrender) is obviously only an aspect of the same process we have been examining from other angles. Lack of freedom is equated with the experience of viewing oneself as moved rather than the mover, i.e., as removed or dissociated from one's own processes. To surrender is in reality surrendering the one's experience rather than repressing or distorting it: that is, of being open. Yet this angle of freedom may be useful for investigating the different means of self-transformation as ways of training in freedom or surrender.

From the point of view of freedom, the ways to self-transformation may be classified in two groups: that of detached ascent and that of descent into the stream of natural events. The former emphasizes freedom from, and is characterized by ascetic and structured quality. Its assumption is that for change to take place, the present personality must be left behind. The reasoning behind this is that since the alternative to man's present conditioning cannot be known to him in his conditioned state, he is provided with universal models, that is, with indications as to how to act, think, and feel, which allow for his individuality but partake in the general qualities of life as lived by those who have attained their goal. Life is patterned with rules or precepts; feeling is patterned with devotionalism, or the deliberate suppression of negative feelings, and the cultivation of love; thinking is patterned with symbols expressive of universal truths. It is expected that all such crutches may sustain the new man until he can walk by himself. Thus, the images or rules provided from without are supposed to anticipate the preferences and perceptions of his deeper being.

This rationale is understandable, yet we need not be blinded by its risk. It has been the fate of religions that symbols more often than not replace the vision of the truth; norms replace forever the life of the individual; and, in general, crutches substitute for legs to the point of their total atrophy.

The opposite approach emphasizes the "surrendering" aspect of freedom, and is characterized by the quest for spontaneity. Most of psychotherapy is based on this approach.

The case of psychoanalysis is almost too obvious for any elaboration. "Free" association is both the tool and the symbol of the person's condition. The analytical process is one of attaining greater ego-permissiveness: the freedom to feel one's own feelings; allow for one's urges, and contact one's spontaneous functions. Aside from the domain of emphasis--which may be that of thinking, remembering, imagining, feeling, and sensing--there is not a great deal of difference between progress in free association or meditation and the practice of self-awareness in Gestalt therapy or in the guided daydream. They all constitute a challenge of "letting go," surrendering to the stream of psychic event, and thus achieving the necessary freedom from interference, censorship, or distractions to let it happen.

In the same light, we may consider the ways of spontaneity in movement--whether the less structured ones--improvisational dance, much of Subud, or the highly structured ones like the Japanese tea ceremony--or the ways of spontaneity in human contact--encounter groups, psychodrama, or the Synanon game. There is also the spontaneity in the reception of impressions from our bodies and the environment, as in sensory awareness, or the spontaneity in the handling of color, shades, and symbolic forms, as in art education. Freedom is freedom to know and freedom to do. Its fruits are those ennunciated in the first page of this essay: on the cognitive side, the Delphic "know thyself," which can only be attained by relinquishing "filtering mechanisms" and daring to see and, on the other side, the Shakespearian "to thine own self be true," which entails the relinquishing of social automatisms and the courage "to be."

Just as the danger in the way of self-denial is that of suppressing the healthy together with the unhealthy, partisans of the negative way see in spontaneity the danger of a delusion of freedom stemming from accord to deeply rooted conditioning, rather than the freedom from conditioning that is sought. In both cases, blind procedures cannot lead to the goal, and the intuition of the living guide cannot be dispensed with.

Previously I have pointed out the connection between the approach of Gestalt therapy and the view of the person as being totally responsible and identical with his processes. Whenever the goal is reached, however (not the definitive one but the limited goal of a shift in the perception of a given behavior), and a patient discovers for instance, how he is worrying rather than being worried or he wants to move away from somebody rather than feeling overcome by irrational discomfort and boredom, then the paradoxical happens: he can stop it if he chooses. For, just as knowledge of the external world gives him power, self-knowledge, in the form of direct experience of his processes, gives him control. And so, at the same time that he identifies with his being as he enters into his processes, he rises above himself. He feels free from his processes now, detached, as the master is from the horse. What seems to be a way of descent into the body and the senses ends up being a way of ascent to the spiritual domain of consciousness and freedom.

I think the same may be said of all the ways of descent. Perhaps the most impressive means of bringing out man-the-animal is through the administration of ibogaine.[66] It results in finding, at the core of "animal" urges, a "wanting more," which in its undifferentiated form is identical with "religious" longing. By entering into the sensuous and instinct-bound experience, paradoxically, its perception is transformed so that it loses much of that which we ordinarily call "senuous." Thus, the practice of sensory awareness by the simple focusing of attention on physical processes frequently leads to peak-experiences or psychedelic-like states. A dictum of the tantra yoga pertains to such phenomena: That which binds us is what may free us.

Increased Self-Acceptance

All of the issues that I have discussed to this point may also be contemplated from the alternative point of view of self-acceptance. We may see self-rejection as what separates man from part of his experience, deprives him of the knowledge of what or who he is, creates conflicts, and takes away from him the freedom to be himself, to surrender to his own style and calling.

Nothing more than rejection in the early years of life arrests the individual's growth, and the whole therapeutic process may be seen as one of undoing the resulting self-rejection resulting therefrom to the point of self-acceptance, self-appreciation, and self-love. Turning from psychological to religious terms, the individual's development is one in the direction of rediscovering his cosubstantiality with the Divine nature and coming closer to seeing the world and himself as God did on the seventh day in the Book of Genesis: "he saw it was good."

Self-rejection is behind all the psychological symptoms of neurosis--notably anxiety and depression--just as self-acceptance is the basis for enjoyment in life. And beyond the usual range of our joys, some mystics would tell us, is the utter self-love of the divine being towards himself, when the ego can melt or realize its unity with essential oneness of existence.

There is a close connection between the question of acceptance and that of coercion, whether external or intrapsychic. Parental authority may both express and convey to the child a lack of acceptance of his own ways and become internalized as both self-coercion and self-hate.

This lack of unity and inner freedom is only another aspect of the fact that the person is not living "from within," as it were, unfolding his organismic potential, but from the point of view of an ideal-image that he believes he is or should be. Self-rejection proceeds from a fantasy of "what I should be" and is directed to a phantom of "what I really am," which never becomes known in its non existence, covered up as it is by the self-image. For this reason, there is an indissoluble relation between self-acceptance and true self-knowledge. Since the rejected is only a fantasy or expectation or a biased interpretation of one's actions, direct non interpretive contact with the experience of the self is a natural corrective of such an attitude. True self-knowledge stirs true self-love, and, conversely, only the known can be loved.

In the educational process, whether institutionalized or not, there can be little question as to the value of acceptance, love, and permissiveness. Yet these are not simple ideas that may be carried mechanically and impersonally into action, just as with the Christian message of love. Acceptance or love entails a subject-to-subject relationship, in addition to mere freedom, and a personal appreciation that cannot be faked without danger. An indissoluble link between the two terms in the injunction "love thy neighbour as thyself" (see Fromm[1]) calls for a personal quality that can only be achieved by self-transformation and not through mere instrumental knowledge.

The central importance of love, support, and true appreciation (as distinct from compulsive approval) for an individual's growth may be understood in terms of the need for the development of self-support, self-appreciation, and self-love. If the transformation process is seen as one of death and rebirth, where the outer man with his unnecessary ways of manipulating the world must give way to the manifestation of the inner, love is the force that can permit the act of "letting go."

Aside from the touchstone of a genuine personal relationship, there are two other elements that permeate the ways of growth toward the issue of self-acceptance, One is the quest for self-knowledge, the other, that of self-realization or self-expression.

The connection between the process of achieving self-insight (experiential self-knowledge) and self-acceptance lies, as the Freudian notion of the unconscious typically conveys, in that we ignore, deny, or repress what we reject. This constitutes a vicious circle; for not only do we restrict our awareness of ourselves in the process of rejecting our experience, but self-ignorance perpetuates self-rejection. Much of the subtle self-rejecting that pervades and impoverishes ordinary life is a residue of childish patterns that persist in the form of a play of imagination. We are afraid of falling short of our idealized self and letting our hidden monster come out of its dark cave in the soul. The therapeutic process is one of learning, through self-knowledge, the worth of one's grain of sand in creation. And in religious terms, the full experience of knowing "who I am" is that of discovering the consubstantiality of man and the divine.

The importance of self-expression in the development of self-acceptance lies partly in the interpersonal situation. That is, no amount of love or support is sufficient for someone hiding behind a mask, for he will never know whether he or the role that he is presenting is really the recipient of such a feeling. "What if I appeared as I am? Then I would not be acceptable any longer." Thus, risktaking in interpersonal contacts, as stressed in encounter groups, and self-disclosure in general, from natural confession to Jourard's "transparent self" approach, provide the occasion to experience one's self as the target of either acceptance or rejection.

On the other hand, self-expression, even outside of the interpersonal context, is a step towards self-acceptance because of its link with the act of consciousness. We are largely unconscious of what we do not express, and in expressing or realizing ourselves (i.e., making ourselves real), we step from the state of potentiality to that of substantial events through which we disclose ourselves to ourselves.

In looking at different systems or procedures from the point of view of their bearing on the experience of self-acceptance, we must consider that self-acceptance is not different from the acceptance of our experience moment after moment and the experiencing of reality rather than fantasy. We might say that the openness to experience, the expression of self-acceptance in a given moment, is but the first degree in an attitude that can grow into joy in experiencing: an expression of self-love, a love of existence. This is the affective component in peak experiences, though probably independent of the "pleasurable" or "painful" nature of the stimulation on a sensory level. There is obviously a wide range of ability to bear physical or moral pain with a "positive attitude," whatever the latter means, and there is even the possibility of wholehearted acceptance of the greatest of "evils,"--even death itself. The "craft of dying" is well documented both in Christian and Tibetan sources, but we understand that that is probably the limiting situation, calling for the greatest achievement of that "sameness in pleasure and pain" of which the Bhagavad Gita speaks.

From the angle of acceptance or openness to experience, it could be said that the greater challenges are those of remaining open to the more unpleasant sides of existence. It is potential unpleasantness that set into action the filtering mechanism in our mind, restricting our awareness in proportion to our fear. If we can conceive that an attitude of openness, in spite of pain, may be trained by exposure to conscious suffering and the commonly avoided aspects of our lives, we may understand the functional aspect of practices that range all the way from the painful initiation ordeals of primitive peoples, through asceticism, to desensitization in behavior therapy. Because of the roughnesses of existence, we are usually half-present in our world. All these practices constitute a challenge not to withdraw from ourselves in the unpleasantness of fatigue, humiliation, fear of pain. Just as in marriage ceremonies the partners commit themselves to stay together "in sickness and in health, for better or for worse, for richricher or for poorer," these practices probably increase our ability to stay in touch with our own selves through the diversity of conditions in life.

Increased Self-Awareness

Another way of looking at the experience is in terms of consciousness. Becoming conscious of the unconscious is the aim of depth psychotherapy; "consciousness expansion" is almost a synonym for the psychedelic venture; heightened states of consciousness are sought in meditation; "awareness" is cultivated in contemporary approaches such as sensory awareness, Gestalt therapy, and sensitivity training.

The mystical and esoteric traditions are permeated with the notion of levels of consciousness that range from sleep to full awakening, an ordinary stage being not far removed from that of dreaming. This is not difficult to accept if we consider not only the limits of our consciousness but the extent to which our action is guided by sufism and our mind is engaged in day dreaming. Enlightenment, therefore, is full awakening, the idea of "light" in the word "enlightenment" being the most natural metaphor for "the light of consciousness." The notion that humanity is asleep is central to sufism and is found in derivations of it, such as the Gurdjieff school.

In the Christian conception, this idea is not as explicit or widely recognized, but this is only a matter of stress. The gospels abound in passages where "being asleep" is to be taken metaphorically, and St. Thomas Aquinas defines original sin as a "languor" of the soul that disrupts the harmony of original justice. Dante Alighieri, too, describes his condition at the beginning of the spiritual quest--and, symbolically, that of humanity--as one of being lost in a dark wood as a consequence of having "fallen asleep."

In dealing with the growth-healing-enlightenment process as one of "awakening" and its goal as one of more developed consciousness, we must realize that we are not speaking of another ingredient or discrete element in such a process and state, but only of shifting our point of view to describe the same single inner event that has been our theme throughout this chapter. What we examined as a question of identity, the experience of being one's self rather than living up to and identifying with an image, entails contact with self, a contact that is of the rate of consciousness. And the dropping of a false identity in the process of contacting the reality of experience, which is part of the shift from unrealistic to realistic apprehension, is part of the shift from dreamlike functioning of the mind to awareness proper.

The apparent opposites of empathic identification and detachment are also part of the phenomenology of wakefulness. We step so lightly into the shoes of our "dream self" or other dream characters, that we forget them very easily. And yet, while dreaming we are submerged in them to the point of forgetting our independent existence as a dreamer. In artistic perception, on the other hand, which may illustrate exalted awareness, empathy, and differentiation, "I am that" and "I am not that" (an experience depicted in psychology of art as "aesthetic distance") go hand in hand. The relationship between the experience of freedom and that of consciousness is obvious enough, since freedom means voluntary action, while unconscious action is involuntary and automatic. That phase between consciousness and self-acceptance was already commented on in terms of how we can only love what we know, knowing being an act of consciousness.

The connection between the question of consciousness and that of unity derives from the fact that it is the split between conscious and unconscious aspects of personality that is behind most of our intrapsychic conflicts. Just as it may not be possible to achieve unity of purpose or action in a group of persons unless their different views are voiced and their points of agreement discovered, it is not possible to attain unity among our inner "I's" unless they make themselves heard. When we are fully conscious of our inner wants, we may be surprised to discover that these "I's" are all much the same and only had different notions about how to go about it.

If the process of growth-enlightenment-healing is one of development of consciousness, we should be able to look at all practical systems or techniques, and this I think that we can well do, in spite of their not being always explicitly conceived in those terms.

The ancient discipline of meditation is overtly aimed at the cultivation of consciousness, and all the contemporary systems that can be grouped as insight therapy also stress the act of becoming conscious of our psychic processes. In contrast to the psychoanalytic and related schools, there has been a growing concern for the noninterpretive aspects in insight psychotherapy (typically in Gestalt therapy) and, in general, for the importance of sensing and feeling, rather than the intellectual understanding of reality. This may be seen, for instance, in the practice of sensory awareness (where the physical aspects of experience are stressed) and in sensitivity training (where the form is in the feelings and in the interpersonal situation).

This trend represents a movement in the direction of the Eastern approach that regards sensing-feeling as closer to "reality," and our interpretation thereof as removed from and a substitute for real knowledge. Like Gestalt therapy, the Eastern disciplines place great weight in the act of simple awareness and attention to the immediacy of experience.

The seventh factor of Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path leading to the extinction of suffering is usually translated as "right mindfulness." In accordance with the canon, monks are repeatedly instructed by Buddha to be continuously "mindful" of their bodies, activities, feelings, states of mind, and objects of consciousness. Thus, in going to a place and in coming from it, in looking at a thing and in looking away from it, in bending and in stretching, one should act with clear awareness.

In the range of ordinary psychological experience, the object of knowledge is the sum of a person's psychological events, and the act of pointing at them may range from Rogerian "reflecting" to psychoanalytic interpretations. In the mystic's terms, though, as probably in the Socratic "know thyself," the self to be known is not the outward appearance of psychological events, but the essence that can only be apprehended through them, whether understood as self, God, Tao or void. In place of personal interpretations, we find here the interpretations of the ultimate reality, the symbols of the hidden secret that constitute the bulk of religious conceptions and art. They cannot substitute the understanding or realization of the truth, which is beyond intellectual apprehension (like personal insight, in a more modest depth), but they point at it "like fingers pointing at the moon," as expressed in Zen, and as a system they mark the Paths of Gnani Yoga, the way of knowledge.

Thus, in the field of religious experience, just as in ordinary experience, we find methods that stress direct experiencing or, conversely, intellectual anticipation of experience and interpretation.

Aside from the approaches aimed at the development of awareness and those that facilitate access to insight through intellectual presentation or symbolic sensitization, any system that exposes the individual to unusual experiences, that requires going beyond the ordinary limits or invites self-expression, has the outcome of showing the person, without need of words: "this is yourself." This may be the basis of the spontaneous craving for normal experiences in some people who have been submerged in a routine life. Since the logical opposition of routine, conventional mechanicalness, and absence of individuality is the meaningful originality of individual expression and choice called for in the creative process, here we find another aspect of why the arts can constitute a way of growth. Not only do they constitute an act of self-realization, but since a creative act can only stem from the self, it offers the self a mirror for self-awareness.

There is a particular approach that deserves closer consideration from the point of view of its bearing on the field of consciousness: it is that of behavior therapy. This is of special interest here, because its theoretical premises give no place to subjective events such as consciousness or insight. Furthermore, some behavioristic psychologists have claimed that in the changes that take place as a result of exposure to other therapies, insight is superfluous, their effectiveness being a result of the positive and negative reinforcement that the patient's behavior is being subjected to from the part of the therapist.

In spite of the interesting accounts of psychoanalysis and client-centered psychotherapies in behavioristic terms, there does not seem to be any humanistic account of the events in behavior therapy in the current literature. Such an account could contribute to a more unified understanding of the change process, showing the conscious aspect of events well-described at the physical end of man's psycho-physical unity. This might not be possible to do with all applications of the behavior theory approach, such as the treatment of alcoholism with conditioned vomiting (where the result is no more than the building in of a new conditioned inhibition), many of its applications may justify classifying the approach as a way of growth. In these cases, the process can be conceived as that of using conditioning principles to decondition, rather than to create new conditioning. Also, it might be contended that this is the aspect of the approach that may sufficiently account for the results, even when the implanting of new and more effective conditioning is being sought and held responsible for improvement.

Under the aspect of awareness or consciousness, "desensitization" is above all else a desensitization to our automatic rejection of contact with certain objects, situations, or persons. The basic reaction, thus, is not truly one of fear of something in the midst of the experiencing, but of fear at the expectation of superficial perceptual identification of the object. What is feared is not the object proper, but a phantom--an implicit assumption about a fantasy of the object or a catastrophic anticipation of the experience of meeting it. To the extent that the desensitization process constitutes training in experiencing, contact rather than avoiding it, it is a training in consciousness. The rejection of an object, situation, or thought is only a means of rejecting the consciousness thereof. Moreover, the learning process leading to the change is probably not in the nature of a new label calling the experience "good" rather than "bad," but a learning that there is nothing to fear and that consciousness takes place in a "fearless" domain.

Conclusion

I hope that this chapter has shed some light on (1) the unity of secular and religious views concerning the process of the "unfolding of man" and (2) the unity of various methods of achieving human growth, from the standpoint of the experience that these methods elicit, rather than from their external descriptions. This experience is one of openness to the reality of every moment, freedom from mechanical ties to the past, and surrender to the laws of one's being; one of living in the body, yet with control of the body and, similarly, in the world, yet with control of circumstances by means of the powers of awareness and independence. It is also an experience of self-acceptance, if the term "self" is understood as one's reality, rather than as a self-concept. Above all, what we are speaking of is an experience of experiencing. For this is what consciousness means, what openness and surrendering lead into; what remains after the veils of conditioned perception are raised and is the substance of acceptance. And since experiencing can only be a matter of experience, it cannot be adequately described or defined, just as the subtle quality of a great man cannot be conveyed by words. As Lao Tze has said: "The way that can be named is not the real way."

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